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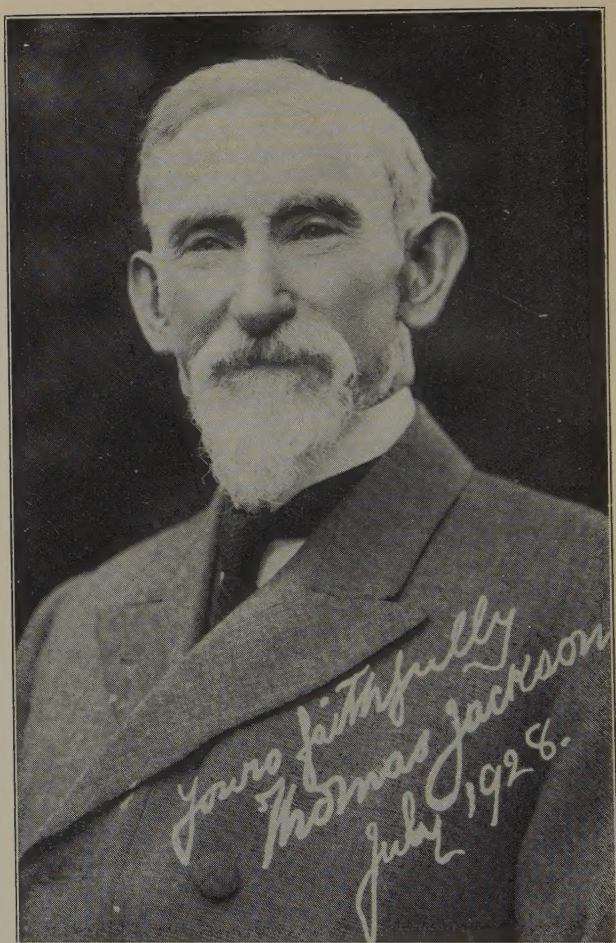
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THOMAS JACKSON
OF WHITECHAPEL



THOMAS JACKSON IN HIS SEVENTY-NINTH YEAR.

Frontispiece.]

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THOMAS JACKSON
1929
OF WHITECHAPEL

*A RECORD OF FIFTY YEARS OF SOCIAL
AND EVANGELISTIC ENTERPRISE*

BY
WILLIAM POTTER

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*These simple records of a brave life
I dedicate to my wife, Thomas
Jackson's daughter, who
resembles her father.*

PREFACE

THIS unadorned narrative of consecration, toil and achievement has been extracted from a great mass of material which would have filled many books. Within the limits of this little volume, only an outline is described of a remarkably full life.

I have to thank the Editor of "The Methodist Leader" for permission to reprint the chapter on "The Road," and my friend, Mr. W. R. Tranmer, for much valuable assistance in working through the material, and aiding in the compilation of the records as they now appear.

WILLIAM POTTER.

FOREST GATE,
LONDON,

January 31st, 1929.

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FOREWORD

BY THE

Rev. J. T. BARKBY

IT is a great pleasure, and a great honour, too, to write a few words as Foreword to the Life of my friend Thomas Jackson, of Whitechapel. He and I were sent into the Ministry from the city of Sheffield, and by what was originally the same Circuit; though he anticipated me by eight years. Then I have known him and his work for the best part of a generation, and for a large part of this time have been intimately associated with him. It is because I have known him so long and so well that I count it a privilege to bear my testimony to his splendid service.

It would not be easy to imagine finer and indeed more remarkable Missionary work than that which for half a century Thomas Jackson has done in the East End of London. The story told in this

FOREWORD

book is in no degree coloured. The author but speaks sober truth when he says it is an "unadorned narrative." Beginning with little save a passionate love of Jesus Christ and just as passionate a determination that others should know Him and the power of His salvation, Thomas Jackson has built up a great Mission Centre, known and honoured by the highest and the lowest in London and throughout the land, for its beneficent ministries, and for which multitudes will thank God through all eternity.

To this great task of helping the people of East London Thomas Jackson has consecrated his life. Neither within nor without the Church has anything been allowed to deflect him from his Divinely appointed task. From the first of January to the thirty-first of December he has said : "This one thing I do," and he has done it magnificently.

And sacrificially, too. The blood streak has been in his consecration. All things
xiv

FOREWORD

have been but loss if only he could thus serve. His time, his talents, his money, all he had and all he is has been laid on the altar. He has been crucified with Christ.

And what a splendid venturesomeness there has been in his faith ! Again and again he has gone out not knowing whither he went because he believed His Master called him.

My good friend is now well on in years, and if his natural strength is somewhat abated his eye is undimmed and the zeal for his Lord as consuming as ever. May his days yet be long in the land, and the pleasure of the Lord continue to prosper in his hands !

A STRANGER

UNTIL recent years, a patch of ground, the Mile End Waste, was the scene of Whitechapel's most interesting public life. There, on Sunday mornings, would foregather Secularists and Christian Evidence Men, Protestant Defence Leaguers and Roman Catholic Ransomers, Theosophists, Christian Scientists and Mormons. Many forms of belief and of disbelief were represented on the Waste. Rival orators on raised platforms were near enough to catch one another's words, and to exchange comments compounded of argument and abuse. "Garn, I'll mop the floor with yer," was a common ending to a discussion, but as the floor mopping was only meant in an argumentative sense, nobody took fright.

On a Sunday morning more than fifty years ago, a new candidate for popular attention appeared on the scene. A fair young man startled the habitués of the

A STRANGER

Waste by commencing to sing. This was breaking the rules, for if an ambitious speaker wished to be heard, all that was expected of him was to mount his portable rostrum and start with some such query as : " What did Charles Bradlaugh say in 1875 ? " Whereupon somebody would retort : " Never mind abaht ole Bradlaugh. What abaht Erpostle Paul ? " Then the speaker was fairly launched on his dialectical voyage. But to invoke a hearing with : " Hark ! The Gospel news is sounding ! " had never been done. The young man prayed. Another violation of usage. When he opened his eyes, he found himself the centre of an astonished crowd. Proceeding to explain that he was a Primitive Methodist Home Missionary, he was rudely interrupted with : " Mister, you're green, you are. You're from the country. Better go back to the country."

" True," replied the missionary, " I'm from the country, but I'm not going back to the country. I've come to London to

A STRANGER

do my Master's work, and here I mean to stay."

The speaker was Thomas Jackson. How he came to London, and something of his history here, will be told in the following pages.

CHAPTER I

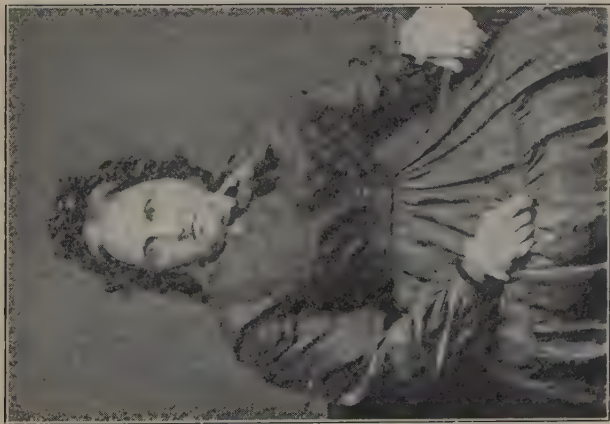
THE BEGINNING

OCTOBER 16TH, 1850, was a natal day of much happiness to two poor people, and afterwards of great blessing to thousands still poorer. On that day Thomas Jackson was born. The place was a little cottage in Windmill Lane, Belper. His parents had no prevision of his career, and it is doubtful whether his father would have wished him to become a minister of religion. For Joseph Jackson was thoroughly nonconformist, even refusing to conform to Nonconformity. He attended neither church nor chapel, but otherwise his reputation was without blemish. With well-warranted pride, his son says of him : " I never knew him do or say anything that would not have been creditable to the strictest church member." He was a

THE BEGINNING

nailmaker, and his conscience was as obdurate as the metal which he wrought. A much-prized testimonial sets forth his part in an agitation for the abolition of church rates. These he refused to pay, and distraint followed. Thomas Jackson well remembers the day when his father said to him: "Tom, my boy, we have to sit on this old squob because they have sold the sofa to pay the parson's rates."

Nails were then made by hand, and the trade was unremunerative for the worker. Even in the most prosperous times wages rarely reached a pound a week. The mother's toil was needed to eke out the household livelihood. Her son has told how she "would rise early in the morning, do her household work, and be off by eight o'clock for a day's washing or charing." Her pay was one shilling. A woman of extraordinary physical strength, she was well fitted to be the disciplinarian of her household. Only when she wielded the



MOTHER OF THOMAS JACKSON.

To face page 2.]



THOMAS JACKSON AT EIGHT YEARS OF AGE.

THE BEGINNING

rod had her children occasion to regret her robustness. When Thomas Jackson was recently asked why dancing was not encouraged at the Whitechapel Institute, he, with a gleam of humorous recollection in his eyes, replied: "My dear mother made me do so much involuntary dancing that I have looked with great disfavour on the exercise ever since." A disobedient act or a late home-coming brought sure and swift correction. But discipline was only an expression of affection, and the affection was real.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, every small English community had its free nurse: a woman who, day and night, heeded and answered pity's call. This Sarah Jackson was to Belper. The philanthropies of Thomas Jackson only continue and extend the work which he saw his mother do. For sixty years she was a loyal Congregationalist, but without sectarian prejudice. The "Ranters" of those days held their Camp Meetings in a

THE BEGINNING

field near to her house. Scores of visitors came from distant places, and provision had to be made for their keen appetites. Mrs. Jackson's big copper kettle and sauce-pans were always requisitioned.

"And what will be your charge for boiling the water?" asked a minister who was unaware of her ways.

"Charge! Charge, sir! When you want to pay for a little kindness, you must go to someone else, and not come to me!"

The mere idea of accepting money for such services was repugnant. Her son fully shares this distaste, which may be the reason why he has consistently refused to accept remuneration for special services rendered to the churches.



BIRTHPLACE.



NAIL SMITHY.

To face page 4.]

CHAPTER II

PRANKS

THE character of little Thomas Jackson was not shaped by copy-book maxims, nor did he belong to the class of good boys who die young. Nevertheless, his early life was frequently in danger through recklessness and love of mischief. Toppling into the Mill Dam in an attempt to catch tadpoles, and foundering out of depth in the Derwent because other boys had dared him to cross the river, are only samples of his juvenile hazards. And peril was not always due to his own rashness. His sister Bessie never forgot the day on which she administered to her brother a dose of laudanum in mistake for cough mixture. Had fatality followed accident, the innocent agent of the misadventure would have mourned her own life away, for she lived for her wonderful brother. Herself timid,

PRANKS

and painfully shy, all the pride of her life was a reflected glory. "Dear Aunt Bessie," as she was known to a later generation, is in Heaven now, searching for, but never finding, the reasons of her admission there. This must be one of the ironies of the Better Land, for all who knew "Aunt Bessie" upon earth, saw Heaven in her modest ways and deeds.

Her brother was untamed by schooling. He did spend one day at school, and it was enough for both teacher and scholar. Describing the experience, he says: "I was placed in one of the classes, and it seemed strange that I had nothing to do." The sense of strangeness in being idle has persisted to this day. Then, as ever, he found something to do. The deed was the ancient trick of using a pin upon the limb of a neighbouring boy. To escape the schoolmaster's hazel stick, the scholar of a day fled from school, resolved never to re-enter it. He became a wage-earner. A farmer gave him twopence a day for

PRANKS

“bird-clapping” during harvest time, and this seemed opulence. At the age of eight, he commenced to learn the trade of nail-making, and remained at this occupation for seven years.

His parents, though not greatly concerned over his absence from day-school, insisted upon regular attendance at Sunday-school; and in the Unitarian Sunday-school, Belper, he learned to read, write and to do sums. To this day, the Unitarian zeal for education has no more devoted admirer than Thomas Jackson, who learned the rudiments under its ægis. School attended, the rest of the Sunday was free. During the long summer evenings, he would roam the fields and woods, where he gained a direct knowledge of birds, beasts and flowers, which remains a priceless possession. “Thomas Jackson—Naturalist,” does not sound congruent with “Jackson of Whitechapel,” but as a matter of fact, few amateurs can so readily name the flora and fauna of the woods. When winter came,

PRANKS

the boys found shelter from the bleak weather in the "Ranters'" chapel, where, though tolerated, they were never welcome visitors. Well known as disturbers of the peace, they were always escorted by a seat-steward to a triangular pew at the very top of the gallery. He, good man, tried to give adequate oversight to the group of young scamps, but, whenever in the ardour of his devotions, he ceased to watch, pea-shooters were produced, and the missiles found a mark in the singers' pew, or even in the pulpit. Ignominious ejection followed.

During a period of prolonged drought, the "Ranters," undisturbed by any doubt regarding the intervention of the Deity in weather conditions, decided to pray for rain. Meetings were held in a little thatched cottage with only a ground floor. The occupant was an elderly woman who never failed to "engage." Her prayers invariably ended with the high-pitched petition: "Lord, pour out Thy blessing upon us.

PRANKS

Let it come in bucketfuls." Tom Jackson, who believed then, and believes still, that prayer is a co-operative concern, decided to lend a hand. One night three boys took pre-arranged stations. One crouched under the window, listening ; another stood by with a bucket of water ; and Tom Jackson was on the ridge of the roof near the chimney. Loud and earnest were the voices within the cottage. When the boy near the window whispered " She's started," the second boy handed up the pail, and with the final petition : " Send it down in bucketfuls," Tom emptied the bucket of water down the chimney, and more soot than blessing fell upon the worshippers.

Tom Jackson and his pranks became intolerable to the sedate people of Belper. Finally he came into contact with the Law. Whether a summons was actually granted is uncertain, but it was freely stated that he would appear before the magistrates on a charge of " trespassing in pursuit of game." His mother arranged for his safety by flight.

PRANKS

A man named Whittle, employed as a carpenter in Sheffield, was spending the "Wakes" holiday in Belper, his native town. Mrs. Jackson persuaded him to take her son with him to Sheffield. Whittle took the boy to the home of a friend, Thomas Bennett, of Attercliffe. As it was midnight when they were admitted, a resting place was improvised for Tom. Next morning, his fate hung in the balance. Mrs. Bennett, who was a Belper woman, remembered a Sunday gown which her young visitor had spoiled in one of his larks, and she had no overweening fondness for him.

"I won't have the young rascal under my roof," was her first decision. But this was not final. Her natural motherliness yielded to the persuasions of her husband, and Tom was given another chance.

CHAPTER III

AWAKENING

MR. BENNETT urged his young visitor to attend the Primitive Methodist chapel. The lad expressed his willingness to go to a Unitarian or to a "Ranters'" chapel. It was only when he was assured that the Primitives and the "Ranters" were one and the same sect that he agreed to accompany Mr. Bennett. What followed was not uncommon in those days of sudden conversions. The sermon disturbed the Belper youth, and after a sleepless night, dawn brought decision. He would be a Christian. Action followed upon the very heels of resolution. That night he made his way to a room in the basement of the chapel, where an old man was arranging the seats for a class-meeting.

"What hast tha' come for, lad?"

The reply was emphatic:

AWAKENING

" I have come to be converted."

" Then," said the old man, " Tha' canst soon settle that. Kneel thee down."

Prayer followed, and then questioning :

" Do'st believe that He will save thee ? "

" Yes."

" Do'st believe that He can save thee now ? "

" Yes."

" Glory be to God. Tha't converted, lad."

A very easy method of conversion, and even in those days it was too easy to be always effectual. But in Thomas Jackson's case, the decision taken at dawn was the vital experience. What happened in the evening only ratified it. He was sixteen years of age when he experienced this cleavage in his life and interests. He was then enrolled a member of the Primitive Methodist denomination, and such he has remained for more than sixty years.

Tom Jackson determined to be a working Christian. His first task was one of witness.

AWAKENING

The crude youths who were employed with him made much irreverent fun when he informed them of his conversion. For three or four days he was the patient butt of their practical jokes. Then a young fellow, saying that Jackson's face was not oily enough for a Methody, applied to it a piece of well-lubricated cotton-waste. Patience failed ; a fight followed ; black eyes were exchanged, and in the end Tom Jackson dealt the knock-out blow. When he returned to his lodging, he made confession to his landlord, Mr. Bennett : " It's no use. I am a backslider."

Mr. Bennett replied : " Thi' must try and keep thi' temper, and try again."

Whether the temper was always kept, is his own secret, but it is certain that he never again lifted his hand in wrath to injure a fellow-creature.

An early effect of conversion was a consciousness of educational need. His reading had been of the lurid kind. " The Murder on the Sands," " The Pirate's

AWAKENING

Grave," and "The Mystery of the Fiery Lake," his favourites, were now thrown into the River Don. For half a year he read nothing but the little Bible, the parting gift of his mother. Thus began a textual knowledge of the Authorised Version which became amazingly accurate. He rarely, if ever, trips in quoting a Bible passage. But he soon discovered that he who the Bible only knows, does not know the Bible. Pence were invested in second-hand copies of "Murray's Grammar," and "Watt's Logic." He became a subscriber to "Cassell's Popular Educator," and the proud possessor of "Finney's Theological Lectures." When "A Reply to Tom Paine" fell into his hands, he found in it an arsenal of ammunition for use against the Secularists.

On the first Sunday after his conversion, he took his stand among the open-air workers, and on the same day became a Sunday-school teacher. His attempt to teach others was a spur to self-improvement.

AWAKENING

Soon he was needed for the work of a lay-preacher. His earliest venture in preaching was made in company with his friend, Thomas Bennett.

Mr. Bennett cheered him by saying :
“ Now my lad, do your best.”

The text was “ This is my friend.” After announcing it, the preacher forgot everything he had wished to say.

“ Give it out again, lad,” was the whispered injunction of Mr. Bennett. This happened three times, and as unbroken silence followed the third, the youthful orator collapsed. Like many other men who afterwards won distinction as public speakers, he wished there and then to end his public career, but his mentor said :
“ Thou’l do better next time.”

This was a truism, for that time he had done nothing. Practice rendered him efficient. He got much informal exercise in preaching while following his occupation, that of an ironworker. On night shifts, the men rested for an hour. Puddlers and

AWAKENING

furnacemen would ask him to preach, and this he did from the eminence of a slag-heap, and was always respectfully heard.

In those days, the Secularists were often heard at street corners advocating their tenets. The newly-fledged "local" attended the meetings in the endeavour to capsize the arguments there propounded. Whenever he challenged them, the Secularists allowed him fifteen minutes in which to state the case for religion. He never pretended to answer them logically, but by turning a joke upon them, would often put them to confusion. A minister of that time, the Rev. William Spivey, said: "Before Jackson went into the ministry, I used to hurry through my services in order to hear him go for the atheists."

It was in the Sunday-school that Thomas Jackson met the lady who became his wife, Miss Annis Ramsden. They were married on Christmas Day, 1872. Then began a partnership as nearly ideal as anything

AWAKENING

earth can show, and which lasted for more than half a century. Their interests were identical, and each passing year bound them more closely together.

CHAPTER IV

ADVENTURE

AT the time of his marriage, Thomas Jackson was receiving the then unusual wage of three pounds a week, and promotion awaited him. Suddenly, a call came to him to serve as circuit missionary. With a facetiousness which he still adopts in broaching important projects, he put the matter to his wife : “ Well, my dear, what about keeping house on a pound a week instead of three pounds ? ”

The answer was serious enough : “ If I have you, Tom, and it is the will of Jesus, I shall be as content to keep house with one as with three pounds a week.”

When Thomas Jackson’s foreman heard of his decision to become a circuit missionary, he said : “ I think you are a foolish young man. You are getting good

ADVENTURE

wages, and stand well in the promotion list, and then you will get five times as much as they offer you for being a missionary. But I know you are stupid. However, I promise you to keep the door open if you ever return."

Thomas Jackson never returned.

So the engagement was duly made with the Sheffield third circuit, but it was of short duration. The Rev. John Wenn insisted that Thomas Jackson's proper place was in the ministry, and before the end of that year, 1876, he was appointed probationary minister to the Bethnal Green Mission, London. The Missionary secretary of the time, who believed in inuring his subordinates to hardships, made the young pair understand that their salary would be a pound a week, out of which they must provide furniture and pay the rent of rooms. Beyond the intimation that he was appointed to the Bethnal Green Mission, Thomas Jackson had received no instructions. Leaving his wife behind to settle the

ADVENTURE

affairs of the household, he came to London in the first week of October, 1876.

When he arrived at the house of the Missionary secretary, he was informed that that gentleman was out of town, and that no arrangements had been made for his reception. He was advised to see the Rev. R. S. Blair, in Poplar, who would no doubt suggest something. Mr. Blair proffered a cup of tea, and enquired where the young preacher would spend the night. "I don't know," was the reply. But Richard Blair knew. He immediately provided a lodgement in his own hospitable home.

A few days later Thomas Jackson was joined by his wife, and temporary accommodation was secured for them in Sidney Street, Whitechapel, opposite a house where, in later years, some notorious assassins perished. The rooms were infested with creeping things of very vicious nature—"London specialities." These murdered sleep. When Mrs. Jackson

ADVENTURE

thought of her little Sheffield home, her tears fell fast. The project of returning to Sheffield was momentarily entertained, but as Thomas Jackson characteristically remarks: "We strengthened each other's hands in God, and in the end cheerfully faced our hardships."

As Thomas Jackson's appointment included the establishing of a new mission in Walthamstow, three rooms were rented in that thriving suburb.

The Bethnal Green Mission occupied two little rooms, one in Squirries Street, and the other not far away, in West Street. The West Street room had been a beer house, and the one in Squirries Street was shockingly unclean by reason of its prolific insect population.

Three persons attended the first service in Squirries Street. One of these was of distinguished appearance, high of brow and with patriarchal beard. Who could he be? His presence gave the preacher a sharp attack of nervousness. When, on the

ADVENTURE

following Tuesday night, the *intellectual* reappeared, not in his Sunday suit, but in the well-known cut of a coster, shame instead of fear was the missionary's strongest feeling. Never again, in the pursuit of his high vocation, would he fear the face of man.

The caretaker at West Street was also a local-preacher, with a liking for preaching funeral sermons. When the horse of a neighbouring greengrocer died, the missionary, in mischievous mood, suggested that as the caretaker-local-preacher was planned to preach on the following Sunday night, he should "improve the occasion." Alas ! The layman took the joke in earnest, and on that Sunday night a few old ladies wept copiously over the last agonies of the deceased steed.

Few though the members were at West Street, they decided to greet their new minister and his wife in the approved manner at a reception tea. When the pair entered the little room, they found a table

ADVENTURE

set with half a dozen cups, saucers and plates. By the side of each plate was a pin, and the strangers wondered what the pins could be for. Their uncertainty passed when a dish of periwinkles was produced. The pins were used to extract the succulent morsels from their shells.

At West Street Thomas Jackson grappled with the first of his many financial schemes. The sum involved was eleven pounds, the cost of a new harmonium. He set about making the acquaintance of possible helpers, and visited first of all a man who plied the humble but lucrative trade of Cats' Meat Merchant. "I don't know you," said the vendor of feline provender, "but you seem a decent chap and trying to do good. I'll give you half a quid."

A greengrocer was the next victim. "Go to the devil, you and your harmonium," said he. "Well, you are likely to supply his address," was the retort. "I think that's worth a bob," replied the green-

ADVENTURE

grocer, and forthwith the coin changed hands.

A tailor's workshop was next visited.

"Give us that song you sang at the corner of West Street," pleaded the master tailor.

"Which song?"

"That one about Zion's hill. Mates, listen to this gent sing a solo."

The collection taken after the performance, realised five shillings.

A retailer of sheeps' heads and feet had no money to spare, but offered "a head and a few trotters."

"Will you keep them for me until next week?"

The tradesman agreed. Next week there was a well-patronised fourpenny supper at which fingers were more freely used than knives and forks. By such means the money was raised, and the harmonium paid for on delivery.

CHAPTER V

CIRCUIT MAKING

IN Marsh Street, Walthamstow, was an abandoned Independent chapel. The use of this was granted to the Primitive Methodists, who commissioned Thomas Jackson to begin services there. The weather was cold, and the chimney of the stove refused to function. The enthusiastic missionary set about the cleaning of the flue, and soon had the appearance of a chimney-sweep. His operations were interrupted by the entrance of a gentleman in clerical attire, who enquired for the minister. Thomas Jackson replied that the minister might be seen in half an hour. The visitor, the Rev. Samuel Conway, a popular Congregational minister, retired, and in due time returned to find a person, who, if he did not resemble a minister, at

CIRCUIT MAKING

least had the likeness of a respectable citizen.

"Excuse me," said Mr. Conway, "but you look very like the sweep I saw here half an hour ago."

"Yes. I was a sweep then, but I am a minister now."

Mr. Conway told the story of this encounter to Mr. Borwick, of Borwick's Baking Powder fame. Such enterprise was after his own heart, and Mr. Borwick sent a donation of twenty pounds to Thomas Jackson for his Mission, and became one of its best friends and supporters.

Methods at Walthamstow were unpretentious and simple. Chief among them were house-to-house visitation and open-air meetings. While yet one umbrella was sufficient to cover the whole membership, Thomas Jackson and his wife sang a duet in a wretched slum known as "The Rookery." People listened attentively, and expected that the singing would be followed by an appeal for coppers. But

CIRCUIT MAKING

when praying and preaching followed, they made ribald remarks, and the meeting ended to the accompaniment of tin-kettle music. At a later open-air effort, a male member of the congregation joined the missionaries, and the duet would have become a trio had not the opening bar been a signal for a shower of refuse. The valiant helper withdrew, and his place was unexpectedly filled by a burly substitute, who insisted upon peace in a very unpeaceful manner. He recognised in the open-air leader one who had visited his invalid daughter, and arranged for her admission into a Nursing Home. When the father saw that it was his child's benefactor whom the crowd was maltreating, he stood by, and rolling up his sleeves, dared anyone to throw again.

In the 'eighties of last century, a very ignorant and noisy atheism was in full blast. Taking many forms, its generic name was "Infidelity." The missionary met it at every turn—in the homes of the people and on the streets. On a day in mid-winter

CIRCUIT MAKING

Thomas Jackson called at a house which might have been untenanted for any furniture that was in it. Yet sheltering there were a man, his wife and six children. They had neither food nor fuel in the house. The father called himself an infidel, and resented the intrusion of a minister. Conversation was difficult, and very rude on the "infidel's" part. Leaving the home, Mr. Jackson ordered coal and food to be sent, and later he found the man a job. Theoretical unbelief crumbled at the application of the Christian Ethic—"practical Christianity" they called it then. The whole household became loyal adherents of the Marsh Street Mission. "That gift of food knocked all the infidelity out of me" was the erstwhile unbeliever's way of accounting for his conversion.

One Sunday afternoon a leaflet was offered to a man whose whole appearance betokened a drink-sodden body and a bemused mind. He accepted the modest offering, saying that it would make a

CIRCUIT MAKING

spill for his pipe. But his blear eye fell upon some word which probed his conscience. Turning to his pals, he said : " If this is true, then I am a fool."

Thus was won a man who served for many years as the respected leader of the open-air mission work. It will be seen that the Marsh Street church was built of very rough material. Thomas Jackson, like his Master, " called sinners to repentance," and not in vain.

A familiar figure in Walthamstow was that of a man whose efforts at pedestrianism needed the whole thoroughfare. His name was Greenwood. The sight of this man as he reeled along Marsh Street stirred Thomas Jackson's compassion. He resolved to visit the woebegone creature, and found him in the thrall of delirium. His wife and brother were trying to hold him down. Associating his unexpected visitor with the phantasies of his disordered brain, the drunkard shrieked with terror at the sight of him. Nothing but the power of a rare

CIRCUIT MAKING

personality could rout such fears. While Thomas Jackson talked brightly, Greenwood's fierceness gave way to composure. But the wild beast was only on a leash, and it was easily broken. The inebriate demanded brandy. He was told : " Brandy will kill you."

" How can I live without it ? " he asked.

" You can. You have the makings of a good man in you, if you will only give up brandy."

At length a promise was exacted from Greenwood that when next he felt the craving for drink he would not go to the public house, but to the house of the minister. At half-past four the following morning, Greenwood, weak, trembling and ill, knocked at Thomas Jackson's door. He begged to be taken to a doctor, but the early hour made the request untimely. Later, he was assisted to a surgery.

It soon became clear to Thomas Jackson that the whole day must be devoted to the care of his desperate acquaintance.

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Greenwood's appearance having been made less disreputable, a day in Epping Forest was proposed, and there the two men roamed for some hours. This quiet companionship soothed the dipsomaniac. Towards evening they entered a cottage where meals were provided for wayfarers. While food was being prepared, Greenwood, overwhelmed by a surge of penitential emotion, cried aloud: "Lord, have mercy on me." The woman of the house rushed into the room, thinking that tragedy was imminent. Mr. Jackson reassured her, and at the same time assured Greenwood of the mercy he craved.

That summer evening, in the Forest cottage, something *did* happen to Greenwood, which set his face towards sobriety, self-respect and social value. Nevertheless, his struggle against his enemy, Drink, did not cease. When passing public-houses he often felt the fierce up-beat of desire. But he never relapsed, and after each ordeal he would put into what he

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called his "spree purse" the sum of money which he might have spent in drink. When the purse was full, he would bring it to his minister, that the money might be used in rescuing other victims of drink. Over a thousand pounds reached Thomas Jackson in this way. Greenwood so flourished that he was able to present two houses to the man who had befriended him. These were made over to the Mission ; a characteristic act, for Thomas Jackson has as much satisfaction in giving wealth away as some other men have in amassing it.

When success was assured at Marsh Street, Thomas Jackson decided to extend the work into new areas. Following his usual custom, he began operations with open-air services, at Chapel End. At the first of these, the singing attracted the landlady of a public-house, who offered the use of an old wooden shed, which had been a skittle-alley, for the services. This was at once accepted, and the transformation of the skittle-alley was begun. The walls

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were lime-washed, the floor spread with sawdust, and a rostrum was made out of rough wooden boxes. The seats were without backs, and the only furniture was a small harmonium. Candles were the sole illuminants. As the wind blew through the cracks of the shed, and rain penetrated freely, the worshippers were glad to protect themselves with umbrellas when the weather was wet or boisterous. An adjoining shed was the abode of a donkey, who frequently uplifted his voice during services. The spirit of the missionary and his little band rose above these disadvantages. Great services were held in the skittle-alley, and many converts were added to the community. Such enterprise could not fail to attract attention, and soon a gentleman offered a hundred and fifty pounds towards the cost of a mission room. Thomas Jackson at once approached a Congregational friend, Mr. John Hitchman, with a request for a site. Mr. Hitchman readily responded with a gift of land. A

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wooden chapel with a vestry was erected, and the whole cost raised. At the opening ceremony, a man well known locally as "Born-drunk Smith," created a sensation when he walked up to the platform and said: "When I was ill, nobody came near me but Mr. Jackson, and I give five quid to show my appreciation."

The mission at Chapel End firmly established, the next neighbourhood to receive attention was Higham Hill. The inevitable open-air service, this time held on a Saturday afternoon, roused a man from his holiday repose. He threw open the window and shouted: "Who the devil has sent you here, making yer jaw?"

"The Lord has sent us, with a message of salvation for you."

"It's a pity the Lord hasn't more sense," replied the irate one, and banged down his window.

Discouragements were met with undaunted temper, and a small cause was established in a cottage. Then

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Mr. Hitchman gave another site, a school chapel, costing seven hundred and fifty pounds, was erected, and two-thirds of the money raised. But the enterprising young missionary was unaware that he needed the sanction of his ecclesiastical leaders for these building schemes. The report of his doings caused consternation. He must be brought to book, and taught to respect authority. Dr. Samuel Antliff was requested to investigate and report. The Doctor paid a surprise visit on a Sunday afternoon. When he arrived he took the only vacant seat in the building. The text was : " Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse and prove me now herewith if I will not open the windows of Heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Dr. Antliff had wit enough to connect his own difficulty in finding a seat with the text. Here was success ! That afternoon, Dr. Antliff heard testimonies which warmed

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his heart: "We think very highly of Thomas Jackson in our home," said a gratified father, "through him our eldest daughter became a Christian."

The missionary was *not* censured. Dr. Antliff became his firm defender and active supporter.

The district of Tower Hamlets was now occupied. Services were held in a stable, until Thomas Jackson found a site that could be purchased for a hundred and eighty pounds. Once more he called upon Mr. Hitchman, who asked: "What funds have you in hand?"

"Not a penny!"

Pretending that urgent business called him, Mr. Hitchman left his visitor with apologies. When he returned, he said:—

"Do you think it wise that you, a minister of religion, should burden yourself with a debt of a hundred and eighty pounds?"

"Yes, sir. Heavy financial burdens are lightly borne when the welfare of souls and the Kingdom of God are in question."

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Mr. Hitchman's urgent business had been the drawing of a cheque for a hundred and eighty pounds, and this he now handed over.

For seven years Thomas Jackson toiled at Walthamstow with unstinted, and to all seeming, unlimited energy. For four of those years he was a probationary minister with a salary never exceeding a pound a week. The strain of preparing for annual examinations was added to the extraordinary activities of his ministerial work. He tried to emulate John Wesley, who restricted his hours of sleep to four, but a collapse of health ended the experiment. Probationary studies once out of the way, he resolved to give his whole time to aggressive mission work. In the first seven years of Thomas Jackson's ministry, he was responsible for the erection of three chapels. But in Walthamstow he left more than material signs of service. From the very débris of character manhood had been rebuilt.

CHAPTER VI

CLAPTON MISSION

IN the year 1883, the missionary committee requested Thomas Jackson to open a mission in Lower Clapton. Premises of a sort were engaged for him, a dilapidated theatre known as "The Old Dusthole." The theatre was the most insanitary and uninviting building that he had ever attempted to use for religious services. Two roof-lights gave the only natural illumination, and in these several panes were broken. The damp condition of the walls caused the paper covering to droop as though in sympathy with the fallen fortunes of the theatre. Garlands of spider tapestry had been woven all over the building. "A queer shop" said one who visited the birthplace of the Clapton Mission, and Thomas Jackson agreed. After

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a week of gratuitous labour as jobbing carpenter and whitewasher, he made the place fairly presentable. On the opening Sunday rain fell through the defective roof. Undaunted, he obtained a ladder, and set about the necessary repairs. While he was thus engaged, Mr. George Nokes, who was then a popular theatre preacher, arrived to take the opening services. "Well," said Mr. Nokes, "you're a capper. A Methodist minister working as a brick-layer on a Sunday morning. You Sabbath breaker!"

On a later Sunday morning two strangers had the gallery of the theatre all to themselves. One of them was manifestly moved during the sermon. The service over, he introduced himself as the conductor of a world-famous Alpine Choir. He offered the services of his choir for Sunday evenings, and the novel feature drew crowds to the old building. When Thomas Jackson raised the question of payment, Professor André said: "The blessing you were

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made to me that Sunday morning leaves me still in your debt."

The work in "The Old Dusthole" flourished, and at the end of a year there were ninety members. Rough and unlettered men were converted, and remained as loyal and enthusiastic helpers. One of the new members was rescued from a pitiful state of degradation. His wife and family were destitute, and his furniture nearly all sold. He himself spent his time drinking in a disreputable public-house. The Sunday before he came under the influence of the Mission he had spent his last penny in drink, and his companions made sport of his misery. They painted him with red ochre, and left him in the gutter, the travesty of a man. Three nights afterwards, he was at one of the Mission services, and with humble penitence, he determined to try again. This man became the head of a happy home and family.

Those who found new hopes and ideals for life were anxious to offer their thanks-

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giving in the prayer-meeting, and some of their utterances were as quaint as they were sincere.

“ Lord, I want You to understand that I have fully made up my mind to have no more blooming ale,” cried one fervent soul ; and another, convinced of his own insignificance, exclaimed : “ O Lord, it is only too true, if Thou art here, then we are nowhere ! ”

“ The Old Dusthole ” was good enough for temporary purposes, just as the Skittle Alley had been, but a more fitting building was needed. With the sum of seven-and-sixpence in hand, Thomas Jackson set about the erection of the present Clapton Park Tabernacle, at a cost of three thousand pounds, and soon the whole amount was raised. Debts, with Thomas Jackson, are incurred only to be liquidated.

The severe winter of 1888, combined with much unemployment, caused widespread misery and suffering. The missionary encountered terrible privation wherever he

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went. In one home he found a widow and her children who were trying to live on four shillings a week, the woman's earnings for needlework. House after house he visited, ever discovering heart-breaking conditions, and doing what he could to bring relief and cheer. He attended Petty Sessions, and gave the magistrates information about the poor people who appeared to answer summonses for arrears of rates. His intervention prevented many orders being made against struggling and deserving men and women. Familiar as he was with poverty and wretchedness, extortion and oppression aroused his ire. One day he had to interview a church deacon who had threatened to sell the scant furniture of a poor woman. Her husband was in the Infirmary, and she and her four children were dependent upon Poor Law relief.

"Do this thing," said he, "and I will call a public meeting to denounce a deacon of the Christian church who allows such an inhuman act to be done in his name."

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On a bitterly cold morning that winter, Thomas Jackson visited an elementary school in the district.

“ It is heart-breaking work, this, Mr. Jackson,” said the headmaster. “ Some of the children fainted this morning through hunger, and many of them have had no breakfast.”

“ How many do you think have come without breakfast this morning ? ”

“ At least three hundred.”

“ Send that number to my school-room to-morrow morning, and they shall have breakfast.”

What an undertaking ! Three hundred guests to provide for in the morning. There was a school-room, and there were tables, and facilities for boiling water ; but no crockery, no food, no money, and less than twenty-four hours' notice. But there was a young man of ardent enthusiasm and inflexible purpose, burning to do his Master's work, and not to be turned aside. The caretaker knew that “ it could never be

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done," until he was assured that it was going to be done. Then his doubtful attitude became one of eager helpfulness. Willing helpers came as they always do when the leader is there. The tradesmen refused to give credit, but what did that matter? The missionary had a presentation gold watch and chain, which could be changed into bread and jam and cocoa and mugs for the time being. Three hundred pinched children had breakfast that morning, and went to school happier than they had been for many a day. After this, through many winters, breakfasts were provided for hungry children on each school morning.

A firm of preserve makers, Messrs. Clarke, Nichol and Coombe, hearing of this provision for the children, requested the privilege of giving the jam. This they did for many years. Altogether, they gave more than two hundred tons, and when they ceased to manufacture the sweet commodity, they still supported



WAITING FOR BREAKFAST.



GUESTS FOR DINNER.

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the work with lavish contributions of money.

The children were curiously primitive, yet worldly-wise. Primitive in their demands on the larder, and in their eagerness to appease the pangs of hunger. They often took surreptitious bites of bread before they received the signal to start breakfast, and they outraged the stateliness of grace before meat by the speed with which they sang it. There was never need to give the instruction, "gather up the fragments that nothing be lost," for by the time the children left the tables all the eatables had disappeared.

"Miss, I ain't had my doorstep," a boy would shout to a helper, meaning that he had not yet received his two slices of bread stuck together with jam. On the other hand, their witty sayings indicated a sophistication startling in children. When asked why they sang grace after meals, one bright youngster answered: "Please sir, to make sure of the next meal."

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“ What will you do with all that bread ? ” asked a visitor.

With a wink to the boy next him, the examinee replied : “ Put it in the breakfast parlour, sir.”

In an address to the children, a speaker asked : “ What are those places that have the three golden balls over them ? ”

“ The pop-shops, sir,” in eager chorus.

“ Good. And now tell me what those balls mean ? ”

The answer was born of experience : “ Two to one you don’t get out what you take in.”

A clothes store was also established for the children. As they came in for breakfast, Thomas Jackson would stand at the door, keenly watching for those with insufficient clothing or worn-out shoes. He would wrap a warm garment round a shivering child, and none was allowed to depart inadequately clad. The need of the clothes and boot store met the workers at every turn. A boy, having finished his

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breakfast, asked if he might leave before the others. When asked why he wanted to leave early, he said: "My young brother is waiting at home for my boots, so that he can come for his breakfast."

CHAPTER VII

SLUM TO SEASIDE

THOMAS JACKSON now began larger philanthropic enterprises. The dire poverty of the people wrought much sickness, and there was then no system of National Health Insurance. He employed a fully-qualified medical man, and opened a dispensary. A charge of twopence was made for medicine, while a fee of sixpence brought the doctor to the patient's home. So popular did the medical work of the Mission become that the pence contributed by the poor equalled the doctor's salary. Rarely, if ever, did this medical work become a charge upon the Mission's funds. Mr. Calow, of Redcar, greatly assisted the medical branch of the work. Mr. Calow was a chemist, and for many years he gratuitously supplied drugs and other medical stores. His interest in Thomas

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Jackson began with the discovery that they were both born in the same town, on the same day. Mr. Calow's contributions to Thomas Jackson's work opened the door of a still larger sphere. Until his lamented death, he supplied medicine without charge to the Primitive Methodist Foreign Missionary Society, and to other societies operating in China, India and Ceylon. Joseph Calow was known among many African tribes as "the great good medicine man." He was the saviour of the sick poor of the London slums, of the sons and daughters of Ham in the African Bush, and of those ready to perish in many lands.

Another department of Thomas Jackson's social work at Clapton was the Legal Bureau. Poor people are easily cheated. Generally they have no knowledge of what is due to them, and when they do know, they are powerless in the assertion of their rights. For such people the Legal Bureau exists. One sample of its work will suffice. A poor girl knocked down by an omnibus,

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suffered from a fractured limb. The late Mr. E. C. Rawlings, the unpaid legal adviser to the Mission, negotiated with the company concerned in the accident, and procured for the girl the sum of one hundred pounds.

The Mission doctor frequently reported that unhealthy home conditions hindered the convalescence of his patients. They needed the bracing air of the seaside. Thomas Jackson decided to provide a Home of Rest at Southend-on-Sea, and to begin mission work there. At an open-air meeting on the sands, a collection which realised four pounds was taken for the new church, then existing only in the missionary's daring mind. The meeting over, a lady onlooker said: "If you decide to have a mission in Southend, I will subscribe four pounds a year."

"Thanks," was the answer, "we *have* decided, and will take the first quarter's subscription now."

A house was taken on short lease for the use of poor and ailing folk, and in one of its

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rooms a Primitive Methodist society of four members met. When the lease expired, it was found that a much larger house was needed, and more suitable premises were taken. Then came an opportunity to purchase a site for a church and Home of Rest, at a cost of £1,175. The land was on the Marine Parade, the most frequented promenade in Southend. Upon this site a church and the first Convalescent Home were built. The neediest people were received into the Home without charge, while others, less needy, paid small sums in acknowledgment of the hospitality which they received. Nor were the necessitous people alone in their desire to share the amenities of the Home. Many ministers and other Christian workers have from time to time sought rest and recreation within its walls. Though the property of the Primitive Methodist denomination, the Home was built for people of all denominations, and representatives of every Christian community have enjoyed its

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privileges. Thousands have entered the Home ill and disheartened, who have gone back to the routine of their daily lives hopeful and well. One dearly beloved invalid failed to benefit by her stay in the Home. She was Thomas Jackson's own daughter, Bessie. A girl of rare beauty, she fell a victim to the scourge of so many young lives—consumption.

Soon the accommodation of the place was overtaxed, and it became necessary to make still further provision. During his walks in the town of Southend, Thomas Jackson passed a beautiful house, situated in charming grounds enclosed by tall trees. As often as he saw it, he wished to add this quiet retreat to his Mission. The house had been originally the residence of a wealthy gentleman, but some years before Thomas Jackson's association with Southend it had become a Holiday Home for women and children. The founder of the Home was the Rev. Given Wilson, the Vicar of Plaistow, who invited as his



HOMES AT SOUTHEND.

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guests the poor but worthy women of East London. After the philanthropic vicar's death, a committee undertook the administration of the Home. They were soon in difficulties, closed the Home, and decided to sell the estate. Their agent offered the property to Thomas Jackson, for the sum of £3,000. Having regard to the cost of necessary alterations, and furniture for twenty-four rooms, he offered the sum of £1,500. The offer was not accepted, and the property remained unsold. Three years later, the Home having passed into the sole administration of a lady, Thomas Jackson visited her to enquire the present price of the estate. She replied:—

“The price to you, Mr. Jackson, is what you offered three years ago, £1,500.”

The purchase was immediately made. Three months later, Thomas Jackson announced that £3,000 had been spent in the acquisition, adaptation and furnishing

SLUM TO SEASIDE

of the Home, and that the total amount had been raised.

The present value of the Southend Holiday Homes is £14,000, and the cost was wholly raised without any grants-in-aid from denominational funds.

CHAPTER VIII

EXPLORING

HOMELESS men who received free meals at Clapton often told tales of sleeping places, and in particular they spoke of Trafalgar Square. Thomas Jackson resolved to investigate this strange dormitory. He and his colleague, the Rev. William Sawyer, arrived there after midnight. To their horrified astonishment they found hundreds of men and women huddled together in all sorts of attitudes, and settled down for the night. Passing from group to group, the missionaries strove to stir hope in the souls of creatures who had fallen to the lowest depth of human wretchedness. At dawn the zealous pair invited the bedraggled crowd to a service in front of the National Art Gallery. An anxious police inspector hurried to the

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scene, and begged that the service should be abandoned.

“ There will be a riot. They will throw you into the fountain ! ”

Since there was no law against it, the persistent missionaries held their service. It lasted for an hour, and was not interrupted. At the close, nothing but appreciation was heard. On following mornings the service was repeated to still larger gatherings. London newspapers gave graphic descriptions of the meetings, and these brought to the Square not only curious spectators, but sympathetic helpers. On one occasion, Mr. William Green, the founder of the King's Own Mission, came to assist. The hapless men and women had a pleasant surprise that morning, for Mr. Green treated four hundred of them to breakfast. The publicity given to these unusual missionary efforts was followed by questions in Parliament. Why did the outcasts prefer Trafalgar Square rather than the dormitories of the workhouses ?

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The result was an enquiry into the conditions of the casual wards, and a great reform of these places. A Frenchman, who had read an account of these Trafalgar Square meetings in "The Figaro," sent Thomas Jackson a beautiful floral design, to be sold for the benefit of London's homeless.

In 1888, during the "Jack the Ripper" scare, Thomas Jackson and his friend George Nokes frequently held meetings in a notorious thieves' kitchen off the Ratcliff Highway. The proprietor of the den warned them that they entered it at their own risk, and foretold broken heads and kindred damage. The place was indescribable. Chairs and tables were screwed to the floor, in order to avert their use as weapons in the free fights for which the place was noted. Men of sinister appearance were busy at the cooking ranges preparing their evening meals. Mingled odours of frying food and vile tobacco permeated the atmosphere, producing a sensation of

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nausea in the visitors. The intrepid evangelists needed all their resolution and endurance. Mounting a table, they began the service with song and prayer according to their invariable custom. They paid many visits to this wretched place. The frequenters, thieves for the most part, always listened with respect, and who can tell what good seed found a fertile spot in that apparently sterile soil? It was noble and brave work, and could not be vain.

CHAPTER IX

EPIC

THROUGHOUT the years of his Clapton ministry, Thomas Jackson's heart was hankering after Whitechapel, the place of his modest beginnings in London. The challenge of its teeming population fascinated his adventurous spirit, but for years, hope was deferred. He could find no suitable building. While inspecting an empty shop in company with the secretary of the denomination, a noisy quarrel broke out between two women, and a fight followed. The secretary, shocked and fearful, exclaimed :—

“ Let us get out of this terrible place, Jackson.”

The experience only added fuel to the fires of Thomas Jackson's ardour. He would yet carry his message to Whitechapel.

EPIC

In the month of October, 1896, he was scanning the pages of a religious newspaper, "The Christian," and his eyes were soon fixed on an appeal which stirred his missionary passion. He read: "It is with great disappointment and deep regret that I have to announce that the good work carried on at the Working Lads' Institute, Whitechapel, for nearly twenty years, is at an end, and the magnificent premises must be sold forthwith. I suppose they will either be devoted to trade, or to a Music Hall or Theatre. Is there not an institution or an individual that will, in God's name, come to the rescue? The situation is the finest in Whitechapel Road. The property has cost £18,000, but if taken for religious purposes might now be had for about half that amount."

The appeal was signed by Henry Hill, a well-known city merchant. This, then, was the long-expected sign. Here was the call, and it could not be refused. With eager haste, Thomas Jackson wrote:—



INSTITUTE.

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EPIC

“ To Mr. Henry Hill,

“ Dear Sir,

“ I have seen your letter in ‘The Christian,’ and I regret that you find it impossible to continue the good work with which your name has been associated in Whitechapel for so many years. If I can exert any influence to prevent its abandonment I shall be very glad. We at the Clapton Mission have been seeking an opening for evangelistic and social work in Whitechapel, and as you will see from the enclosed plan, the district is part of our mission. If you can make an appointment for next Wednesday, I shall be glad to see you about the Institute.”

At the interview, Mr. Hill asked :—

“ Have you any funds with which to purchase ? ”

“ None whatever.”

“ Has your connexion any society or congregation in Whitechapel ? ”

“ No.”

“ Have your connexional authorities

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been consulted about your proposal to purchase ? ”

“ Not yet, but they will be ! ”

“ If I can induce the mortgagees to delay the sale, by what date can you give a definite reply ? ”

“ In two or three weeks, certainly.”

That his earnest and confident visitor had deeply impressed Mr. Hill was apparent from his parting words :—

“ Your past record and present faith that God is leading you in this proposal may prove you to be the rescuer, and if so I shall be deeply grateful.”

No time was lost in submitting the proposal to the missionary committee. But what a proposal ! “ A debt of £8,000 ! ” “ Besides, the Gentile population was so scant. Only Jews abounded in White-chapel.” The objectors had forgotten THE JEW, and they had also forgotten that the finest missionary ever known had sprung from that mystic race. By the barest possible majority the executive

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committee decided to stand by the new venture. Several voted favourably, not because they believed in the mission, but because they believed in the missionary. It was Thomas Jackson's personality that won the day. The property was conveyed for £8,000, and £1,200 was immediately spent in renovation and repairs.

Then began the greatest work of Thomas Jackson's career. It was undertaken with iron determination, yet with simple faith. Its reward was triumphant success. Thousands of homeless waifs, of outcast men and downtrodden women, bless the day when Thomas Jackson came to Whitechapel. His beneficent work for the humble and poor, carried on with unchanging purpose for many years, now found scope worthy of his peculiar genius. Whitechapel is a better place because a fervent evangelist is doing his Master's work there.

While the work of renovation was in progress, Thomas Jackson was superin-

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tending operations one day, and he was *not* in clerical habiliments. To him entered the then Rector of Whitechapel, who, assuming that he spoke to the caretaker, asked to be shown over the building.

"Splendid premises these. I think the church ought to have them," he remarked.

"The church has bought them," answered Thomas Jackson.

"Oh no. The Bishop of London would not purchase without consulting me."

"But the church *has* secured them without consulting you."

"To what church do you refer?"

"The Holy Catholic Apostolic Primitive Methodist Church, of which I am minister, caretaker, and bishop in Whitechapel."

Raillery of this sort was not appreciated by the reverend gentleman, who promptly departed.

CHAPTER X

SEQUEL

THOMAS JACKSON had been less than three years in charge of the Institute when the District Railway Company secured the passing of a Bill in Parliament granting powers to purchase property abutting on a proposed extension of the line. The company wished to take a part of the Institute at the rear. Three officials called to inspect the premises, and they at once realised that their proposition would be more costly than they had anticipated. While the Institute was closed, it had been classed as "an unoccupied building in a dilapidated condition," but three years of successful mission work had greatly enhanced the value of the property. The City Valuer was appointed arbitrator. On examining the data for valuation which

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Thomas Jackson had collected, he accepted them without demur.

“Your work,” said he, “has added to the value of this property, and I think you should have the benefit of it in the settlement.”

“No, sir,” was the reply, “I am not a minister of religion for what I can get out of it, and beyond out-of-pocket expenses, the whole amount must go to the trustees.”

Included in the terms of purchase were :—

First, that the Railway Company, in taking the rear portion of the property mentioned in the notice to treat should build the retaining wall, and in no way interfere with the front portion of the building.

Second, that the Railway Company should pay the sum of £20,500, free of costs. The company was to take possession forthwith, and interest at the rate of five per cent. was to be paid on the amount of the purchase sum until completion. As the company did not complete the purchase

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until several months after contract, the actual amount paid to the trustees of the Institute was £20,911.

The people who had predicted certain disaster, and opposed the purchase of the Institute, now began to sing another tune.

“What luck! Jackson is the luckiest man on earth.”

It is not thus that Thomas Jackson regards the matter. He says and believes that :—“Any man who will risk much for Christ’s sake, may be assured that his steps will be ordered by the Lord.”

The erstwhile critics were now liberal in suggestions for the disposal of the money. Thomas Jackson, however, caused it to be known that Whitechapel Mission was quite competent to deal with the matter, and that outside interference was neither needed nor agreeable. The debt of £9,200 was liquidated, and the sum of £1,020 paid to the Missionary Committee for interest since the purchase of the building; and the

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residue of the money was temporarily invested.

Thus a daring enterprise, begun in faith, was splendidly vindicated. The single-minded missionary was now free to carry on his great work unencumbered by debt, and with money in hand to develop his many plans for aiding the poor of White-chapel.

The Working Lads' Institute is the loftiest building in the East End of London. From its roof may be seen the ancient buildings of the city. Conspicuous is the dome of St. Paul's, and beyond, the tower of St. Stephen's. Across the river is the great glittering dome so well known to pleasure seekers, and to the north the Alexandra Palace marks the limit of vision. Looking eastward, the roofs of houses are seen, dreary houses; but in the remote distance are traces of Epping Forest's greenery.

Within the Institute are twenty-eight rooms. The chief of these is the Lecture

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Hall which was opened by Queen Alexandra, and where time is measured by a clock, the gift of King Edward the Seventh. Valuable coloured windows are dedicated to Religion, to Industry, and to Art. The other rooms comprise dormitories, reading and games rooms ; and some have been adapted for the residence of the Mission staff.

CHAPTER XI

THE ROAD

SIR WALTER BESANT, in "All Sorts and Conditions of Men," describes Whitechapel Road as "the noblest thoroughfare in the world." The stretch of road from Aldgate to the Mile End is imposing in its breadth, and well deserves Sir Walter Besant's encomium. At night this road is brilliantly illuminated by electric lamps, and beneath the fluctuating glare moves the motliest crowd on which any light ever shone. There are Negroes and Lascars from the adjacent docks; Celestials, oblique of eye, and the plucky little Japanese. There are, in overwhelming numbers, children of Israel, indicating their race by facial contour and unrestrained gesticulation. Many of these Jews are refugees from Russia and Poland, for

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whom, alas ! the name of Christ is the synonym of persecution. There are British people too, mostly of the poorer sort. Men and women who draw away from the light, and slouch amid the shadows ; people with strange histories, too painful to write down here.

Thomas Jackson claims a pitch fronting the Institute for services out of doors. On one side of him is a quack doctor, wheedling sixpences out of the crowd, and on the other a cheap-jack of enormous lung-power. Even Thomas Jackson never faces more difficult work. By this time he is a master of the art of handling crowds in the open. He has acquired a very thorough understanding of the people. His good humour is unfailing, and his wit ever ready. Usually a little group of people is with him, assembled round a portable harmonium. Service begins with the singing of a hymn, but the passing crowd is unheeding. Only a few people halt to listen. Then the wise leader asks a girl with a sweet voice to sing

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a solo—some home-song, with a refrain, like :—

“ At the close of day ’twill be sweet to say
I have brought some lost one home.”

There is something restful in the song, and the wayfarers are tired. As the gentle cadences fall upon the air, the listeners increase, and at the end of the song two or three hundred people are standing near. How to keep them ? That is the question. The man who fails to interest them will be left talking into the air ; and woe betide the speaker who cannot turn an interruption to advantage.

When twenty theological students spent a fortnight in Whitechapel, each man was expected to address an open-air meeting, and no plea of weak voice was sufficient excuse for exemption. One fully-prepared oration on “ The helpfulness of Jesus Christ ” was completely spoilt by an old woman’s query : “ Will Jesus help me to sell a ha’porth of onions ? ”

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Another orator apparently believed that a sure way of reconciling unfortunates to the hardship of this present world was by describing to them the riches of another. With great fluency, if not accuracy, he told of the grandeur of the world to come.

“ Ever bin there, Guv’nor ? ” came from a Cockney member of the audience.

Shamefaced, the speaker confessed that Heaven was a place hitherto unvisited by him.

“ Then tell us abaht some plice where you bin,” was the quick retort.

An open-air meeting in the Whitechapel Road is a battle of wits.

A ticket-of-leave man, who had given proof of a real change of character, was eager to help in the work. He had a fine tenor voice, and his rendering of “ Jesu, Lover of my soul ” enthralled the crowd. A gentleman was brought to a standstill by the sound of the sweet clear voice. He enquired who the singer was, and was told : “ One of Jackson’s ticket-of-leave

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men." This drew from him the vehement expostulation :—

"In the name of decency I protest against a ticket-of-leave man recommending religion."

His discomfiture was complete when Thomas Jackson said :—

"Excuse me, sir, but you are in the wrong place. You should be among the Scribes and Pharisees. This is a meeting for Publicans and Sinners."

CHAPTER XII

WORK AMONG WOMEN

IN mean by-streets off the Whitechapel Road the people live, and there the children find their playgrounds ; dangerous playgrounds in these days. One of the Mission helpers was one day delivering cards of invitation to the services. He was accosted by a little girl, who said :—

“ Gie’s a bill, guv’nor. Nobody never gives us nofink.”

A glorious indifference to the proper use of negatives, but pathetic all the same. In the same street the mission worker observed a boy in charge of what should have been a perambulator, but was not. It was an orange-box, with a single wheel on one side and two wheels on the other. The single wheel collapsed, and the worker discovered that a baby was tied into the

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orange-box with string. He tried to rescue the screaming infant, but the contraption was too intricate. His efforts were contemptuously watched by the boy, who at length said to him :—" Look here, guv'nor, you hold the blooming kid, while I cut the string." That night the mission worker was looking out of a window of the Institute, and saw many people around the door of an adjoining public-house. He rushed out to learn the reason for the assembly. On the edge of the crowd was the boy who in the afternoon had been in charge of " the blooming kid."

" What's the matter ? " asked the worker.

The boy pointed to an intoxicated woman, who, with incessant reiteration was shouting to a policeman :—

" Tyke me to the stytion " (the police station).

Said the boy :—" She says as how the potman nicked her chynge for a tanner, and she won't gow 'ome."



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With marvellous patience, the policeman tried to persuade her to go home, but in vain.

"Tyke me to the stytion," was her only response.

In the end the policeman put his hand on her shoulder, and she, throwing herself down on the pavement, refused to move. Presently, that horrible vehicle, a police hand-ambulance, arrived, and the woman was strapped into it and carried away, shrieking and cursing; a dehumanised thing, as morally insensate as the beasts that perish, and far less clean.

There was dire need for work among the women of Whitechapel. The earliest efforts to gather them from the slums would have been disheartening had not the missionary been invincible in hope. He and a Sister of the People visited the poorest streets and alleys, and left five thousand printed invitations to attend a meeting for women. Yet only four women came to the first meeting,

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and two of these were intoxicated. When asked what hymns they knew, one of them said :—

“ Let’s try ‘ Dolly Gray.’ That’s my old man’s fav’rit ”

Fortunately, the boisterousness of the intoxicated women ceased when slumber fell upon them. With material so unpromising, the beginning of Thomas Jackson’s work for Whitechapel women was far from cheerful. For some weeks, no addition was made. At the end of the first month no more than these four women attended the meeting, but by that time they were all sober. That success might be deferred was in Thomas Jackson’s programme, but that it would come was never in doubt. When the Sister despaired of the work and would have given up the meeting, he humorously rallied her hopes with :—

“ When we have already improved the quality by fifty per cent., I call that good business.” Gradually the meeting grew, and at the end of twelve months, instead

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of the original four, the attendance had reached four hundred.

In the early days of the Women's Own, the Halfpenny Tea was introduced. Mrs. Jackson gave each woman a cup of tea, with a piece of bread-and-butter and a slice of cake. This little arrangement for refreshment undoubtedly increased the popularity of the meeting. When the rationing of war-time put an end to this pleasant provision, there was no falling off in attendance. The women now came to the meeting for its own sake. The fame of the Halfpenny Tea spread far. It even reached the Lady Mayoress of London, who expressed a wish to participate. She was greatly amused when her halfpenny was demanded, but in some confusion when her search for money was unavailing. Thomas Jackson lent her the coin. Was ever the Lady Mayoress of London, except on this occasion, put to the necessity of asking a Methodist minister to help her out of financial straits?

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The London County Council arranged a series of lectures on Hygiene for the Whitechapel Women's Own. When the lecturer, an elderly spinster, gave her first lecture on "How to Dress the Baby," it was obvious that her demands in the matter of baby's apparel were far beyond the purses of the poor mothers, while her criticisms of present modes were very scornful. Thomas Jackson privately suggested to the gifted lady that she should modify her demands, but she preferred her own methods. At the second lecture, on "How to Feed the Baby," there were frequent murmurs of dissent. At length one mother, ignorant no doubt, but certainly experienced, expressed the feeling of the meeting when she exclaimed: "Rats, rats! You wait until you have eight kids like what I have, and then you may know something about babies."

The late Mr. George Nokes, who in his day was probably the most popular speaker in the East End, especially delighted the

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Whitechapel women. Nokes affected a Cockney dialect. By way of expressing his affection for the women, he would address them as "my old dears." He encouraged the single women by reminding them of the age of Methuselah at the time of his marriage. They never need leave the "Band of Hope." Fearful that "my old dears" might become pessimistic he would say :—

"Whenever I has a fit of the blues, I goes dahn into the crypt of St. Paul's, and there I reads 'If yer want to see his monnymment, luk arahand!'"

It was not a bishop, but George Nokes who was the victim of a piece of repartee that has been retailed more than once. When he saw a mother making for the door with her crying child, Nokes said :—

"Missus, don't bother to take that kiddy out. He don't annoy me."

"No," said the woman, "I know he don't annoy you, Georgie, but you are annoying him."

It was a great gain to the Women's Own

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when Mrs. Holiday Bickerstaffe Kendall, the wife of the historian of the Primitive Methodist Church, became the first president of the meeting. Mrs. Kendall is a devout and delicate lady of considerable culture. Though at that time she was without experience of public work, her fine gifts were soon apparent, and in a little while she had won great affection. In her own household she was wont to reply to questions with "Yes, love" or "No, love." Involuntarily, she transferred this habit to Whitechapel. Haggard faces beamed and became almost beautiful again when Mrs. Kendall said "Yes, love." The situation was, however, embarrassing in its humour, when, assisting at a dinner for homeless men, Mrs. Kendall replied to the query of one of them with "Yes, love." The winks which the men exchanged marked the comicality of the incident. What testimonies the women offered to Mrs. Kendall's influence! One of them whispered to her:—

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“ Since I came here, everything has been different. I can do my work at home ever so much better, it does not seem so hard, and I look forward with joy to the Monday afternoon meeting.”

Such was the attachment of one dear old soul to Mrs. Kendall, that she extracted a promise that, when her end came, the good lady would be with her.

CHAPTER XIII

HOMELESS LADS

THE distinctive purpose of the founder in erecting the Working Lads' Institute was the intellectual and moral improvement of Whitechapel youths. This work was continued under the new régime. By means of a well-stocked and well-patronised reading-room and the establishment of evening classes, much was done to quicken a desire for learning. Physical culture was made easy by a professional instructor in a thoroughly equipped gymnasium. The Games Room offered greatly appreciated facilities for conversation, and for the fun, often mischievous fun, which is never alien from the nature of a real boy. The tenement homes from which the lads came were so limited in accommodation, that they scarcely afforded room for eating and sleeping. Such social life as the boys

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knew was found in the streets, and in many instances, as their years increased, in the public-houses. The Institute offered true home comforts and something more. The idea of the founder was to assist respectable lads, and only respectable lads. But Thomas Jackson was full of compassion for boys who had strayed from the path of rectitude. It was enough for him to know that boys were friendless and forsaken. Being satisfied that their distress was real, he was not disposed to conduct a too severe inquisition into their antecedents. He had been in possession of the Institute only a few weeks when he placed in a prominent position the now well-known notice :—

“ HOME FOR FRIENDLESS AND ORPHAN
LADS.”

The first applicant was a boy of fourteen years. He had known neither father nor mother. For some nights he had slept under a barrow, and there a sympathetic policeman found him. When admitted to

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the Home, he showed terrible signs of privation and hardship. He was washed, fed, and given new clothes. When invited to look into a mirror, he exclaimed :—

“ I’ve not seen myself look like this never before, I ain’t.”

In the Institute he was sheltered until employment was found for him, and he was able to fend for himself.

He was the first of three thousand boys who have been rescued and taught the responsibilities of citizenship because Thomas Jackson intervened to arrest the wretchedness of their lives. Lads who have been through his hands may be found in all parts of the world, and in all positions, lowly and exalted.

Among the earliest admissions to the Home was a lad who bore the famous name, William Shakespeare. He had stolen his mother’s savings, and added to this the theft of a bicycle. Then he rode from Derbyshire into London, only to receive punishment in kind. His money and the

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bicycle were stolen from him, and for three days he had only such food as he could beg. He was received into the Home, and his mother was sent for. When she arrived, she uttered no word of upbraiding, but embracing him, freely forgave him. The lad was utterly broken down in penitence. At the joint request of mother and son, he remained at the Institute. Mr. Jackson procured employment for him at the office of a London Railway Company. The youth fully discharged his liabilities in Derbyshire, and paid for his maintenance at the Institute. Promotion at the office soon followed, and in the end he was appointed to an important post on a South African Railway. Never again did William Shakespeare dishonour his classic name.

On a raw winter's morning, the children had assembled at Whitechapel for their free meal. A visitor entered the hall accompanied by a boy who was shivering from exposure and hunger. The Samaritan said to Thomas Jackson :—

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“ There is a lad here, sir, that I found sleeping on a doorstep in Houndsditch, at three o’clock this morning. His forlorn condition made me pity him, and I have brought him to you hoping that you might befriend him.”

Thomas Jackson decided to admit the youthful outcast. When this decision was announced there was a quick change of expression on the lad’s face. For good reason he was placed apart from the other guests, and given a meal, which he ravenously bolted. Breakfast over, his hair was cropped, and the little fellow was introduced into an antiseptic bath. His clothing was quickly taken to the furnace and burned. A complete outfit of clean clothing was given him. He then took his place as a member of the Whitechapel family. Next morning he said he had “ slept wonderful,” the “ copper ” hadn’t troubled him once during the night. He was required to do odd jobs at the Institute, and in these showed great willingness. He

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was industrious, obliging, and honest. The way opened for him to enter the service of a gentleman who was wishful to befriend an orphan lad. The youth entered upon the duties of a page-boy, full of excitement, and determined to do his best.

A few months passed, and while he was still happy in his situation, a letter was received at the Institute which changed the course of his career. The letter contained an enquiry respecting a lad who was found homeless and friendless in White-chapel, and who was reported to have been admitted to the Home. The correspondent, who lived in America, and who was a relation of the bright page-boy, offered to take full responsibility for the lad's future if he would go to America. The passage money was sent to Thomas Jackson. When the day came for the boy to leave the Institute, the lads and staff assembled to wish him God-speed and a safe journey. The little waif who had so endeared himself to all, carried across the sea to his new and strange

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home the memory of sweet sounds—the singing of the hymn : “ God be with you till we meet again.”

Records of all the boys who have passed through the Institute are carefully kept, but only typical instances can be cited here. Names are withheld, because these boys are now men, and no man's face should be covered with shame because of the misfortunes, and even sins, of his youth.

A boy aged fifteen was admitted. Both his parents were dead, and he knew no relation who could assist him. Unable to find employment, he had spent his days in the streets and his nights on the Embankment. After care and testing, he was recommended as steward's assistant on a steamship. Thomas Jackson provided the necessary outfit. The lad has given satisfaction.

A Leeds youth, in desperation, walked from Leeds to London. His mother was dead, and his father a homeless drunkard.

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When received at the Institute, the youth was destitute. He was given new clothing, and a situation was procured for him as a porter in an establishment in Bow Churchyard, City.

The callousness of parents was responsible for the situation of another boy. Because he failed to get employment they turned him away from home. Only when his hardship was past bearing did he come to Thomas Jackson. Then he found a friend who was able to help him to employment. The subsequent behaviour of this youth was exemplary.

Gratifying news concerning the prosperity of boys who were once befriended in the Institute often reaches Thomas Jackson. One day a prosperous American gentleman called upon him, and introduced himself as the proprietor of an establishment in New York. He said he had called at the request of his manager, a splendid fellow, who had been one of Thomas Jackson's boys. On examining the record of this lad, who is

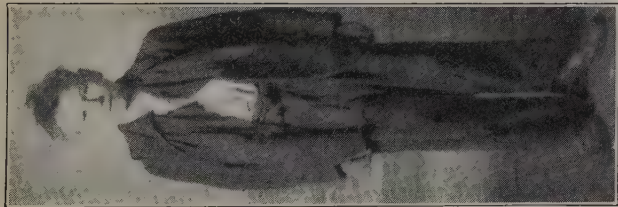
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now a successful man of business in America, this entry was found :

“ A.B., charged with sleeping out. Placed on probation under our care. Was in a very destitute condition. We provided for him until he got work. After several months in the Home, he secured a berth on a steamship, and sailed for America. Have not heard of him since.”

Another unexpected visitor at the Institute was an officer of the Royal Navy. He called to remind Mr. Jackson how he had been received into the Home, an orphan lad. He declared that the good influences of that time had clung to him throughout his life, and that he owed his position in the Navy entirely to the change of life that had come to him then.

The driver of an express train, as he stepped from his engine, recognised Mr. Jackson, who was walking along the platform of the Midland Station, Sheffield. Here was another rescued lad. Years ago, he had been received into the Whitechapel



RAW MATERIAL.
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THE FINISHED ARTICLE.

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Institute, and on again seeing his benefactor, was constrained to offer his thanks. There are instances enough of this kind to fill many books—instances of boys and youths rescued from the streets, housed, fed and clothed, and taught life's better way ; so that instead of being a peril to their fellows, they became good men, and in their turn, benefactors of their kind.

CHAPTER XIV

DUTIES OF TRUSTEES

THE manifold social and evangelistic activities of the Institute soon overtaxed the capacity of the building, and further accommodation was required. An ideal arrangement would have been to separate the social from the purely evangelistic side of the Mission, allotting each to its own building. For a number of years this was impossible, as no second building was available. Not until 1906 did events conspire to give the needed accommodation. On May 19th of that year a paragraph in a London paper was headed : "Another East End Nonconformist church closed and to be sold." The church in question was the Brunswick Congregational, situated across the road, and not more than a hundred yards to the east of the Institute.



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DUTIES OF TRUSTEES

It was the very place needed for the Whitechapel Mission.

Thomas Jackson entered into negotiations with the secretary of the London Congregational Union. After an unsuccessful attempt to induce the Union to hand over the premises, he learned from the secretary that the property was expected to realise £10,000. Soon a large poster on the church front announced : " These valuable freehold premises, comprising chapel seating five hundred, large schoolroom, and lecture room, two class rooms and two corner shops, will be sold by auction on Wednesday, July 15th, 1906, at the Mart, Tokenhouse Yard."

When Thomas Jackson read this notice, he inwardly said " perhaps," and at once took steps to prevent the sale. He learned that there was only one acting trustee, and forthwith visited him. The trustee said : " You know, Mr. Jackson, that a trustee has duties in the disposal of property."

It was obvious that this particular trustee

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interpreted his duties in monetary terms—£10,000. Whereupon Mr. Jackson delivered one of his most powerful sermons, with “duties” as the text. He said: “Your chief duty is to see that this particular property is used for the purposes for which it was erected. I ask you to consider which of the two things will give you most satisfaction at the Judgment Day—to know that for the sake of a few thousand pounds you sold the property to a Music Hall syndicate for purposes which may ruin the prospects and characters of thousands of young people; or that you accepted several thousand pounds less, in order that the Gospel might still be preached and Christian work carried on.”

With Judgment Day involved in the transaction, the trustee admitted that Thomas Jackson was right, and agreed to cancel the sale, provided that the amount of debt on the building, £3,900, was paid by the following Tuesday. The money was duly lodged with solicitors, and on that

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Tuesday morning, Brunswick Hall was transferred to the Whitechapel Mission. Extensive alterations and repairs were carried out at a cost of £3,000. A little more than half the cost of this undertaking was paid out of the money which had been invested at the time of the transaction with the railway company. A debt of £3,400 remained, and six years later this was paid off.

CHAPTER XV

THE WHITECHAPEL FAMILY

WHEN the Working Lads' Institute became Methodist property, Thomas Jackson and his family removed from Clapton and took possession of rooms which had been adapted for their residence in the Whitechapel building. The surrender of comfort was immeasurable, but inasmuch as he intended the Institute to be a great household, he knew that it could not be such if the father and mother lived at a distance. The nature of the work demanded the presence of Thomas Jackson and his wife day and night. He himself declared that "the amenities and comforts of suburban residence, with casual visits and limited attendance in the abodes of squalor and want, are not my ideal for the evangelist of the slums. Only by residing and toiling continuously in their midst can the best

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work be done for the poor.” Such devotion involved complete identification with the life of Whitechapel, and in its service Mrs. Jackson died.

For some years Thomas Jackson had continued to superintend the Clapton Mission, as well as the work in Whitechapel. The development of the work at Whitechapel compelled him reluctantly to detach himself from Clapton. His friends in North-east London desired to present their beloved minister with a substantial monetary gift, but this he resolutely refused. They insisted, however, on presenting an Address which recorded some of the results of his work among them. The Address is a plain statement of facts :

“ We rejoice that as a result of your labours in Clapton Mission, there are five hundred and sixty members and one thousand scholars and teachers. Freehold property to the value of £37,000 has been erected or purchased. In addition, more than £20,000 has been raised for the funds

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of the Mission. In connection with the social work, originated and maintained by you, an ideal Home of Rest, with accommodation for forty visitors, has been built at Southend-on-Sea ; ninety thousand invalids have received medical treatment ; two hundred and fifty thousand free breakfasts have been given to starving children ; eighty thousand dinners have been distributed among the necessitous families ; and ten thousand children have been taken for a holiday into the country."

Though the dullness of statistics is an axiom, those who will take pains to understand will find glowing meanings in the figures appertaining to Thomas Jackson, for here is hidden romance. What a tale of pioneering is suggested by a return of five hundred and fifty members where formerly there was none. What daring and acumen lie behind the acquisition of property valued at £37,000. What sympathy and effective appeal are needed to raise £20,000 for social ministries. If the reader has ever

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anxiously watched for the restoration by medical treatment of one dear friend, let him try to gauge the amount of human feeling that goes with ninety thousand vigils like his own. What joy in the recovery, but what disappointment when medical skill is unavailable. Hunger has been fittingly likened to a wolf, and happily in these days fewer people feel the lacerating bite of his fang. But at a time when unemployment was rife, and when there was no insurance against it, sharp hunger was far too common. It was cruel enough for adult endurance, but think of a hungry child. And then try to visualise a multitude of fed and happy little folk, who might have been still the victims of the wolf.

These social activities were subjected to much criticism, even from the standpoint of religion. Christians were not then as widely awake as they are now to the social demands of the Gospel. Grave fears were expressed that with so much social work, the church's spiritual functions would be neglected.

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One speaker declared : " We need a conception of religion that goes higher than the feeding of slum children." To what heights his thoughts would soar, he alone knew. In the highest court of all, where the clear light of Christ's judgment shines, it is declared that acceptable religion consists in the sympathetic discharge of social duty. " I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat."

Social agencies were also assailed by certain reformers who looked to political change as the sole means of human well-being. Christian philanthropy was contemptuously dismissed as " charity," a mere palliative which retards the good time coming. There are many people who propose to love mankind in the mass, who have never relieved the woes of a single human being. Indifferent to such theorists and their propositions, Thomas Jackson pursued his sacred mission of amelioration. So discerningly was the work done in the beginning at Clapton, that its main features

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have survived to this day. During the ministry of the Rev. J. K. Ellwood, a ministry of twenty-one years, Clapton Mission has gone from strength to strength.

CHAPTER XVI

BRUNSWICK HALL SHELTER

ON an unusually bleak Sunday night, Thomas Jackson was conducting an evangelistic service to the very poor people in Brunswick Hall. The preacher was seen to be strangely moved during the service. At the close he mentioned the cause of his emotion. He said that he was sad because so many men in the congregation would leave the Hall to spend the night in the streets. During the service the question had been laid upon his heart: "What would Jesus Christ have him do *that* night?" He then announced that the warm schoolroom was available for all homeless men who cared to stay there. To the shocked surprise of the workers, no fewer than one hundred and two men accepted the invitation. They were given a plain supper, and before turning out at

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six o'clock the next morning, each man ate a sufficient breakfast.

From that time the schoolroom of Brunswick Hall became a place of refuge for drifting humanity. More than temporary relief was intended. The men were questioned, and it was found that the disreputable appearance of many of them was due to misfortune. Employment was their chief need, but the condition of their clothing prejudiced each application for work.

Thomas Jackson undertook to make men passably presentable. If a man needed to have his locks shorn, a barber and shears were at hand. The cobbler's art restored footwear that was not too far gone. When men needed a complete change of apparel, the clothes store was rummaged. The work of sorting, adapting and mending garments received from kindly donors, was a remarkably effective means of assistance. In Thomas Jackson's own graphic words :
" Any fashion of garments since Noah left

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the ark is welcome, if wearable. It is wonderful how our workers, with the aid of a pair of scissors, needle and thread, can transform old fashions into new. There is a sanctified inventiveness and ingenuity exhibited by our female helpers in the clothing department."

Innumerable instances show that restoration of appearance went far towards the restoration of the men themselves. Some of them who found work would have had no chance at all but for the opportunity of rehabilitation afforded at Brunswick Hall. A man who obtained a post as baker's mate on a White Star liner, wrote: "As you have been so good as to give me some kind assistance during my time of trouble, I take it as my duty to write this testimonial to express my best gratitude to you. I feel as if I were a new man since I have received food and shelter at Brunswick Hall for several nights, which enabled me to look for work in the daytime. Otherwise, if I had been compelled to walk the streets, I

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should have been fit for nothing the next day."

Another man, who was in a most neglected condition when he was admitted to the shelter, so far improved his appearance that he applied successfully for a situation that had been refused him on a previous occasion because of his disreputable looks. So great was the change that he was not recognised as the same man.

On one of the bitterest nights of the year 1907, a pitiable object appeared at the door of the Brunswick Hall. Only by a free use of words could his clothing be said to cover him. He was shivering and famished, and at his wits' ends. His plea for admission to the shelter was heeded, and he was welcomed, warmed and fed.

In a short address, Thomas Jackson reminded his unfortunate audience of another life they had known, very different from the life of London "rejects." He spoke of homes, real homes, which the men had once known and loved. Then he very

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kindly told them the sad truth: "You are not as good now as you were then." But he knew how easy it was to go wrong. He knew something more than this. He knew how they might arise to claim a life finer than any they had ever known. Their host that night was not the minister of Brunswick Hall, but Jesus who was present to break the power of cancelled sin. Thus the real elevation of the Host proceeded.

One man who listened had been already softened by his kind welcome to the shelter. Before the meeting closed, he had resolved to abandon his evil courses. "God helping him, he would lead a new life." For several days he was sheltered in Brunswick Hall, and strengthened in body and soul. In London he had formed bad acquaintanceships, and to escape from these, he "took to the road." He tramped to Sheffield, his native town. Reflection during the long and lonely walk strengthened his resolution. Arriving in Sheffield, he entered a Methodist church. The appearance of a tramp caused



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SERVING SUPPER TO "DOWN AND OUTS."

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consternation in the congregation. They offered him money, which he refused, saying that he had been converted in Whitechapel, and intended to make good.

What happened afterwards demonstrated his sincerity. He found employment in an iron and steel works, where he established his position by steady and conscientious application. His first attempt to tell of the change that had been wrought in his life was at a noonday service held at the gates of the iron works. Simply, and with strong emotion, he told his tale of real life, and his hearers were deeply stirred. The records of genuine human experience never fail to carry conviction. Later, his testimony produced a wholly unexpected result. In one of the public squares of Sheffield, an anti-religious lecturer regularly took his stand. With the sublime assurance of his kind, he challenged any member of his audience to make out a case for Christianity. One evening the Whitechapel convert stepped forward and recited the facts of

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his own life. He ended his statement with the cry : " This is what Christianity has done for me ! " Then the marvel happened. The lecturer, who was clearly an honest man, could not withstand the simple plea for faith. His disbelief was shaken, and in time he became a convinced Christian. He is a bookseller, and formerly he had specialised in the publications of the Rationalists. Now his shop is a depôt for Christian literature, and he himself is a Wesleyan local preacher. These facts are well known to-day in the city of Sheffield.

The ex-derelect, now permanently settled in his work, and secure in the affection of his wife and family, possesses a comfortable home. Ever remembering his debt to Whitechapel Mission, his support of the work there is extraordinary in its generosity.

CHAPTER XVII

WORK AMONG PRISONERS

THE problem of the discharged prisoner is so difficult that even his well-wishers often feel impotent. At the expiration of his sentence he is liberated to face society once more with the feeling that he is an alien. Is there any place for him outside the prison walls? Bearing the stigma of crime, can he hope to find employment? The pittance he may earn in gaol is just enough to lead him into temptation again. Much is now being done by the "Prisoners' Aid Society," perhaps all that can be done. But fifty years ago the scene outside the prison gates on the morning of his liberation was no inducement to a prisoner to walk in virtue's ways. Gaol sharks in the shape of former associates were there to meet him.

Thomas Jackson often met prisoners on

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the expiration of their term. His purpose was so well known that one morning he overheard one of the crowd say: "I wonder what bloke old Jackson's going to collar?"

A prison-gate encounter was literally a fight for the souls of men. The riff-raff ever on the wait for discharged prisoners were on one side, and Thomas Jackson on the other. One morning he persuaded sixteen discharged men to enter a Mission Room; but many more fell into bad hands, and were taken—in some instances almost dragged, into the nearest public-house. Thus was the warfare waged at the prison gate.

There were serio-comic elements in the request which a prisoner's wife made to Thomas Jackson as he waited one morning at the gates of Pentonville. The man had received a term of imprisonment for thieving. His wife said: "Excuse me, sir, but ain't you Mr. Jackson, of Clapton? I want to beg a favour of you. My old man's

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been doing three months' hard, and when he comes out he will have a hard job to get work ; but if some clergyman like yourself would write him a good character, he would soon pick up something."

In the year 1921, a Metropolitan magistrate had before him a man who had been already convicted and imprisoned twenty-six times. The prisoner was now charged for the twenty-seventh time. The magistrate, whose faith in human nature was still alive, appealed to the man in the dock to avoid spending a life-time in prison. The remnants of a despairing manhood rallied to the appeal. The prisoner promised that he would try to live honestly, and he was bound over to appear for judgment if called upon. The Whitechapel Mission and the Church Army were asked to take care of him. After a few weeks he was put into the sole care of the Whitechapel Mission. He was a cabinet-maker ; a workshop was fitted up for him at the Institute ; he was supplied with tools ; and Thomas

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Jackson secured orders for furniture, which the man executed with much skill.

For eighteen months he did his work under the close supervision of the Mission, and during that period he found his lost manhood again. The capable craftsman can never entirely lose his pride in producing useful and beautiful things ; for the instinct to create, and to find joy in it, is divine. Surrounded by benign influences, this maker of things was himself re-made.

Finally he obtained employment in a Garden City, where artistic furniture is appreciated. When, from time to time, he returns to the Mission to express all over again his undying gratitude, he always produces his bank-book for Thomas Jackson's inspection. Its ever increasing credit-balance is sure evidence of sobriety and industry.

This piece of contemporary history is calculated to restore in the most hopeless misanthrope a belief in his fellow-men. Thomas Jackson, however, would offer this

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story as only one out of many, in proof of the power of Christianity to save to the uttermost. But it is Christianity applied in patient practice, in altruistic endeavour, which works the miracle.

At Pentonville, Thomas Jackson met the victim of a miscarriage of justice which made a furore throughout the land. Adolf Beck, a Scandinavian, was arrested in the neighbourhood of Victoria Station, on charges of fraud. Throughout his trial he insisted that he was innocent, and declared that he was the victim of a "vile conspiracy," but the evidence as to identification convinced the jury, and Beck was sentenced to three years' penal servitude. During his imprisonment, he profited by the ministrations of a Primitive Methodist minister, the Rev. J. Phillips Read. Near the end of Beck's term, Mr. Read wrote to Thomas Jackson, intimating that the prisoner would be removed to Pentonville for discharge. Mr. Read had become a firm believer in Beck's

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innocence. On the day of Beck's release, Thomas Jackson was allowed to meet him, by the courtesy of the Prison Governor, in a private room. Beck, who had expected to meet a minister professionally garbed, was disappointed to see one whose religion had more to do with action than with attire. Beck's mood quickly passed when he was invited to share Thomas Jackson's home, where he resided for the following fifteen months. In keeping with his oft-protested innocence, Beck attended the services, and became a mission worker. Meanwhile he made ceaseless efforts to expose what he described as the "vile conspiracy" against him. At length, the late Mr. George R. Sims took up Beck's case, and in various newspapers with which he was connected, he proclaimed Beck's innocence.

Thomas Jackson's loyal adherence to an ex-convict was not without cost. Beck, as a ticket-of-leave man, had to report at the local police-station, and on one of these visits, Thomas Jackson accompanied him.

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The reward of his kindness was a visit from a constable in plain clothes, who advised him not to be seen publicly in Beck's company again if he valued his reputation. Some subscriptions were withheld from the Mission, because no money could be spared for "an institution which harboured impostors." A hard scepticism surrounded poor Beck. It became a fixed idea of his that by haunting the scene of his arrest, he would one day find the proofs of his innocence. Alas! a day came when all hopes were dashed. Beck was re-arrested; as before, in the neighbourhood of Victoria Station. A new indictment of fraud was framed against him, and he was duly sent for trial. His few friends now hung their heads in silence. Then the unexpected happened. During this trial the real criminal surrendered. He admitted his guilt, not only of the present series of frauds, but of those for which Beck had been previously sentenced. Beck was immediately released, and his friends suddenly

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became legion. The case was debated in Parliament, and the British Government awarded the victim of mistaken identity a solatium of five thousand pounds. A better result still followed. It was undoubtedly the Beck case which led to the establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal.

Immediately after his liberation, Beck wrote to Thomas Jackson in moving terms :
“ What has happened is entirely the answer to continual and fervent prayers. When you know the manner in which this man came to light you will realise that God has watched over me in my terrible trouble.”

CHAPTER XVIII

FIRST OFFENDERS

MR. J. A. R. CAIRNS, the great-hearted Metropolitan magistrate, has written in the London "Times": "Few people appreciate the wastage of young life due partly to unemployment, and partly to the lack of discipline and control. The dole and out-door relief are not solving the problem, nor rendering it any easier of solution. Lads are put on probation, but the old environment and conditions prevail, and they relapse. They come back on a second offence or a third. I appeal to those who are interested in social reclamation, though I do not hold out the work as easy or pleasant. It is a duty nevertheless, and I submit it to the special consideration of those who complain about the harshness of the law."

Mr. Cairns' appeal is a free confession of

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the law's failure, notwithstanding its enlightened magistracy, to reclaim erring youth. This work can only be well done by those whose chief purpose is, not the infliction of penal discipline, but the restoration of the offender. For thirty years the Home of the Whitechapel Institute has been doing this work for which Mr. Cairns pleads. It provides for the humane treatment of juvenile offenders, and demonstrates that the change of treatment, from severity to kindness, succeeds.

Lads admitted to the home are not picked for their virtues, but rather for the opposite reason ; yet very few fail to respond to the effort made to save them. Within a period of six months, seventy-two youths were received into the Home from the police courts, and of these, seven reappeared before the magistrates. The work of the Home would have been justified had only seven been reclaimed. But sixty-five entered occupations and troubled the courts no more. They were sent out to employ-

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ment in London, the industrial centres of the north, and on farms in Devonshire. The employers emphatically attest their satisfaction. The Manager of "The City Builders and Contractors," writes: "I have a dozen of your young fellows working for me, and in all cases they give satisfaction. A carpenter's mate has been with me two and a half years, and is a splendid worker. Another is a general labourer, most willing and ready, being typical of the rest. Whenever I have a vacancy I shall not fail to give you the chance of filling it for me."

Magistrates, Probation Officers and others with special knowledge of youthful delinquents, join in the commendation of Thomas Jackson's work for First Offenders. The Lord Mayor of London, addressing a youth whom he had decided to put on probation, said: "Mr. Jackson's Home in Whitechapel is a good Home, and he will help any lad who wishes to do right."

A City Police Court Missionary who has

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been in close touch with the Institute for twelve years, states that he has brought to the home "many lads who were the despair of the Justices, and whose only other refuge would have been prison. Their reformation had been marvellous."

The Probation Officer of Chelmsford, in his annual report to the Justices, asserted: "The best Home for lads in London known to me is the Working Lads' Institute at 279, Whitechapel Road. I never get a refusal there. The splendid management is worthy of all praise."

The late Sir Stuart Samuel, Bart., whose knowledge of the Jewish community in East London was unrivalled, and who claimed to have grown grey in the service of the Institute, said in his last public address: "I was at first attracted to the Institute by its wide tolerance. No religious barrier is erected in its good work. To snatch boys from a career of crime is super religion. I noted that earlier in this meeting came the words 'Forgive us our

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trespasses as we forgive.' We cannot err on the side of forgiveness. When the Institute took a bad boy and made him a good one, it effected a double service ; it performed a service to the boy and to the State."

Mr. Bernard Shaw asks : " Is it true that all law-breakers can be cured by kindness ?" His own answer is emphatically negative. Had the question been put to Thomas Jackson, he would have replied : " Many can." He does not despair even of hardened criminals, but he is fully convinced that most of those who have taken only the first step in crime can be " cured " by the consideration which kindness prompts. Under his care more than a thousand First Offenders have passed, and 70 per cent. of them have become law-abiding citizens in self-supporting situations. This achievement has cost the Nation nothing. When an offender is sent to a reformatory, to Borstal or to prison, the cost is borne by the State ; but when the Justice, in the

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exercise of leniency, places a youth on probation, and sends him to the White-chapel Home, all expenses are paid by the funds of the Institute.

CHAPTER XIX

AN ANTI-SWEATING CAMPAIGN

AS late as the beginning of the present century, the under-payment of the home-worker was the most acute of our economic problems. Women especially were the sufferers. Sweating was general in the larger towns of the country, but East London was its headquarters. By way of giving publicity to this intolerable evil, the "Daily News" organised an exhibition of "sweated goods." Thomas Jackson served on the executive, and supplied many of the sample exhibits. Among these was a tin-tack box, made by a woman who had to provide her own paste, walk a mile for materials, and the same distance in returning the finished article. Her pay was twopence a gross. A well-known firm paid a woman twopence farthing a gross for making match-boxes.

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A gentleman's well-finished tie was shown, for which the maker had received one farthing. Blouse-makers were remunerated at the rate of a penny for each article. These were generally made in a single room, which served for eating, sleeping and working. Presiding at an Exhibition meeting, Thomas Jackson told of a home where a man was dying of consumption. While three children played in the dirt on the floor, the mother of the family sat blouse-making. As each article was finished, it was thrown on to the sick man's bed. These blouses were intended for shipment to a British Colony. Who can tell where the tale of disease ended ?

Thomas Jackson threw himself with tremendous vigour into the anti-sweating campaign. For a number of years his summer holidays were spent in delivering open-air lectures in many English towns, upon the home-worker's hopeless lot. He mercilessly pilloried the sweater, and showed the proofs of his guilt. During these

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lectures, the sordid theme was often relieved by comical episodes. While he was exhibiting a shirt made by sweated labour, at a lecture on the beach of a summer resort, a facetious Yorkshireman interrupted him with the query : " I say, mister, which is t' top end ut shirt ? "

" The end nearest your tongue," was the quick answer.

" That's reet, mon, thou'll do," said the appreciative humorist.

At the close of one of the lectures, an itinerant showman, impressed by the possibilities of extending his own line of business, said : " I wouldn't mind taking you on at two quid a week."

There was an exciting scene on Bridlington sands, when a well-dressed Jew treated the lecturer to a furious tirade. Thomas Jackson patiently heard the Jew's eloquence ; and then, to the delight of the crowd he compelled the sweaters' champion to listen for a quarter of an hour to home truths, attested by

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undeniable evidence. At the end, the holiday-makers were eager to give the discomfited Israelite a taste of sea-water, but this Thomas Jackson prevented. He received the Jew's apology, and urbanely invited him to subscribe to the Whitechapel Mission as an *amende honorable*.

Despite the fun which attended these open-air demonstrations of sweated industries, Thomas Jackson was consumed by the zeal of serious purpose. He was working for the abolition of sweating. To his great joy, Parliament set up Wages Boards, which fixed rates of remuneration far exceeding the old scales of payment. The minimum subsistence allowance in some trades was three or four times as much as in the days before the anti-sweating agitation.

In the original and best sense of the word, Thomas Jackson is a politician. Politics is a means of doing his duty to his fellow-citizens. Members of Parliament came to know him as a persistent "lobbier" when-

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ever measures were mooted which affected the life and condition of the poor. He believes in the words of the great Lord Acton, that: "Laws should be adapted to those who have the heaviest stake in the country; for whom misgovernment means not mortified pride or stinted luxury, but want and pain and degradation; risk to their own lives and their children's souls."

CHAPTER XX

DISTINGUISHED HELPERS

IN the early days of the Clapton ministry, Thomas Jackson received a letter which opened with : " It is very clear that you and I would agree very well in our idea of the true Christlike way of serving our fellows." The writer was Sir William P. Hartley, and the letter marked the beginning of a co-operation in the service of the poor which lasted as long as Sir William lived. Thomas Jackson's financial difficulties were often eased by Sir William's intervention ; an intervention all the more pleasant because unsolicited. Very welcome to the missionary must have been Sir William's enquiry : " I am writing to ask you if you want me to help you with your Poor Fund ? " Such confidence came to exist between donor and minister that Sir William could write : " I enclose

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you my cheque for £100, free of all restrictions. If at any time you run short, let me know." There was an arrangement by which the Missionary Committee agreed to advance any money required for the Whitechapel Social Fund, but it was not always in a position to do so. Concerning such a situation, Sir William wrote : " If ever you are in a similar position and do not want to approach the General Missionary Committee, please let me know." That Sir William *more* than fulfilled his offers may be gathered from the following communication : " Mr. Rawlings mentioned to me that the money left on Southend (£500) was needed. In order that you may have no inconvenience in the matter I have sent a cheque for the amount." Not only the work of the Mission, but Thomas Jackson's domestic comforts were in Sir William's thoughts when he wrote : " I feel that the enclosed £10 may be useful for yourself and Mrs. Jackson. Please accept the amount for yourselves, *and not*

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for the soup." All the same, the report shows that the soup was enriched, and not the Jackson household.

Some of Thomas Jackson's schemes Sir William watched with concern. When the first furnished house was taken for a Home of Rest at Southend, Sir William wrote : " I trust that in taking the furnished house you will not be going too far. I do not want you to take on more than you can manage." Throughout the years, Sir William contributed thousands of pounds to Thomas Jackson's social work. There came a day when Sir William was perplexed by the eccentric behaviour of the White-chapel minister and his wife. A letter is inserted in Dr. Peake's " Life of Sir William Hartley," in which the Knight forcefully states his opinions : " I notice that Mr. and Mrs. Jackson are going to the extraordinary length of giving to the Home of Rest the £100 which we gave them from the Missionary Committee, for their extra work and splendid management of the White-

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chapel Institute job. I don't at all approve of this. I think it is most extravagant on their part considering their circumstances ; but when they have made such an enormous sacrifice, I feel I must send another £50, which I do." Sir William's mind protested, but his heart agreed, and his perplexity issued in further liberality.

Another generous helper of the Clapton Mission was Mr. Charles Russell, Q.C., afterwards Sir Charles Russell, M.P., and still later Lord Russell of Killowen, Lord Chief Justice of England. He came to the " Old Dusthole " to deliver an address on " Local Option," a question on which a Parliamentary election was fought. Thomas Jackson presided, and Speaker and Chairman became affectionate friends. Always on the look-out for new helpers, Thomas Jackson invited Mr. Charles Russell to preside at one of his meetings. The reply was unpromising : " I think that politics and religion ought not to be mixed up, and that a man ought not to do anything that

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he would not even be asked to do if he were not a politician. I do not take this course without consulting friends, and I may say that both John Morley and Chamberlain act upon this principle. I have refused to do what you ask for my own co-religionists. (Russell was a devout Roman Catholic.) I am sure I shall have the opportunity of more legitimately showing my sympathy with your work, and my respect for yourself." This was the first of scores of letters which passed between the two men. Soon the stiff address of the earliest letter: "Rev. and Dear Sir," softened into "My Dear Jackson." The men rejoiced to meet each other in public meetings, in committees, at the House of Commons, the Law Courts and their respective homes. Whether Lord Russell changed his views on the subject of mixing politics and religion is unknown, but he certainly waived his objections. For many years he presided at the anniversary of the Clapton Mission's Social

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Agencies, freely and fervently taking part in the religious exercises. He often requested that "Rock of Ages" should be sung, and revealed melting emotion during the singing, for he was more Catholic than Roman.

How free and friendly the relations between Lord Russell and Thomas Jackson became may be seen in the following transcript: "I have just had a bad debt unexpectedly paid me. I might do worse than send it to you. Here it is—£10. Dear Jackson, Always yours, C. Russell."

Lord Russell consulted Thomas Jackson on many questions—public and private. Does the majority drop in an election, then Lord Russell divulges his feelings: "I feel annoyed—greatly—at the small majority, and I begin to fear that someone else might have better combined the forces. I wish we could talk this point over."

Even in the preparation of a speech, Thomas Jackson's aid was invited: "I have shortly to address a Local Option

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meeting. Will you send me some of the most telling figures, showing the expenditure on drink, as compared with that on bread, knowledge, etc. ? ”

Though Lord Russell was a staunch Roman Catholic, and Thomas Jackson an equally unbending Protestant, both men realised that the cause of charity is too sacred to be lost in a welter of denominational prejudices. The bond of friendship between them was their desire in common to serve mankind, and especially to serve the neediest classes of men. Their intimacy continued until Lord Russell's death.

The Marquis Townsend, another of Thomas Jackson's helpers, was a great-hearted man, who gave away large sums of money in Bethnal Green. The law in those days was less vigilant in its scrutiny of charities than now, with the result that many bogus concerns flourished. It was obvious to Thomas Jackson's experience that the Marquis's charity was being abused. When this was demonstrated, the Marquis,

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who was among the least suspicious of men, was astonished. He accepted the escort of Thomas Jackson on a tour of the East End. The day was chill, and very foggy. A genuine London fog offends nearly all the senses. You feel it, see it, smell it and taste it—everything except hear it. That day, no more serious mishaps occurred than finding the right number in the wrong street, slipping down area steps several times, and encountering ghostly shapes which materialised on collision. The explorers saw many distressing things. For once, the Marquis saw the genuine poor in houses where grates were cold and cupboards bare. From that day, the Marquis Townsend made Thomas Jackson his chief almoner.

Lady Ashburton was greatly interested in East End mission work. Having read a newspaper notice of the work at Clapton, she invited Thomas Jackson to her home. Following his call, she visited the Clapton Mission, and was considerably impressed.

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Lady Ashburton, like the Marquis Townsend, had parted with much money indiscriminately. She had been in the habit of contributing to an undenominational mission which had received from her sums amounting to seven hundred pounds. The leader of this mission impudently demanded five hundred and fifty pounds which, he said, Lady Ashburton had promised. In her distress she asked the advice of Thomas Jackson. He knew the blackmailer, and was able to save Lady Ashburton from this wicked imposition, greatly to her relief. Lady Ashburton not only gave liberally in support of Thomas Jackson's work, but often called him into council in the disbursement of her other charitable funds.

One of the earliest of Thomas Jackson's friends was Joseph Gurney Barclay, the famous Banker, as was also his partner, Mr. Beavan. To the great surprise of the recipient, a letter was one morning delivered at Clapton, inviting Thomas Jackson to

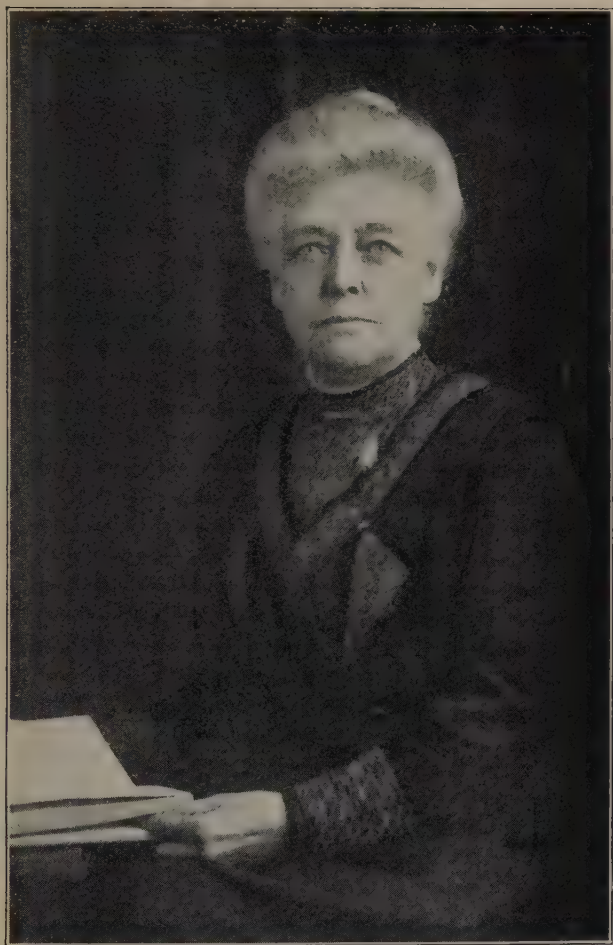
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call upon Mr. Barclay, at eight-thirty the following morning. Mr. Barclay's home was in Leyton, and is now the Livingstone College. The visitor was shown into the library and there Mr. Barclay said that the work of the Clapton Mission had come to his knowledge, and he wished to assist it. Assistance meant a cheque for a substantial sum of money. Mr. Barclay frequently repeated his invitation, and there were many brief, but pleasant, early morning interviews in that library, which always closed with a gift for the Mission.

Not less honoured in Whitechapel is the multitude of friends who, from limited means, support its agencies. The motive of their gifts gives them a right to a place among "distinguished helpers." Among these may be mentioned a lady (though the wife of a working-man, she fully deserves the title) connected with a London Methodist church. She and her husband were blessed with a son—a bright boy, whose teachers predicted for him a rare

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career. A little legacy fell to these happy people, and this was immediately earmarked for Billy's education. Before the money was needed, the boy was called to a life where bright boys are brighter still. Grief-stricken, the mother consulted her minister. She said : " The Lord has taken Billy, and it has nearly broken our hearts. The money was Billy's, and the Lord has taken him. The Lord must have Billy's money, too." A first gift of fifty pounds, followed by many others, was sent to Thomas Jackson, " to make sure that the money would be used to help boys." Comment on this golden narrative is needless. It shines in the glow of its own beauty.



MRS. JACKSON.

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CHAPTER XXI

THE COMPANION

HERE something must be written of the lady whose constant care had so much to do with Thomas Jackson's extraordinary history.

Without the incitements of public recognition, so lavishly and deservedly bestowed upon her husband, she pursued an unostentatious, but heroic way. Her selflessness was an abiding wonder to her household and friends.

Mrs. Jackson was born on May 15th, 1851, in the city of Sheffield. From the infants' class she graduated to the position of teacher in the Princess Street Primitive Methodist Sunday School. There she met Thomas Jackson. Religion must have been an absorbing concern in those days, for we are assured that the young couple permitted nothing to take precedence over

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attendance at chapel, Sunday School, the class meeting and the open-air services. They were married on Christmas Day, 1872, and they lived together as with the mind and heart of one.

When the call came, she freely surrendered her home in Sheffield for she knew not what in London. Mrs. Jackson rarely spoke of the privation of those days. The theme was too painful. Once, however, she did say: "We never actually lacked bread, but often we had nothing else." There was a certain Christmastide of which she herself never spoke. During the week it seemed as if bread would be the sole diet for Christmas Day. All their money had gone in providing for others. To discuss their private affairs outside the home circle would have been intolerable. But on Christmas Day a miracle happened, a wonder of beneficence. A hitherto unknown friend appeared, bringing with him sumptuous fare for Christmas Day. This human wonder-worker later made possible

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much of the unique liberality of Mr. and Mrs. Jackson.

It was only after Mrs. Jackson's death that the full story of the first free breakfast was told. The winter was hard and bitter. A famished child was the commonest of sights in Clapton. Something had to be done. As they had no funds, they resorted to the pawnbroker, for the first and last time. Without consultation, Mrs. Jackson took some household treasures, and left them in "uncle's" care.

One characteristic saying comes from those hard times: "We are better off than our Saviour when He was on earth." Not often did she use the language of religion, but in her own mind, everything was settled by reference to Jesus. She was what, in these days, is called a "simple Jesus worshipper." His example was decisive. Nothing more could be said.

The drudgery of those early days must have been without parallel in the life of any other minister's wife. Chapel-keeping,

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scrubbing, the fight against living filth, all went to make up the tale. Often, taking her baby with her, she would be in the schoolroom at six o'clock in the morning, to superintend a breakfast for three hundred children. Her mirthful heart, however, made light of all this toil. To strangers she generally appeared a person of serious mien, but her intimate friends knew her to be naturally full of merriment. How she revelled in the comical sayings and doings of her grandchildren. Her genial banter fell upon all her intimates. Even her husband did not escape. He is a warrior ever, but many an encounter with "authorities" has been averted by her pawky raillery. Her "delicious wit" made the years of hardship endurable.

Once, when the family exchequer was very reduced, the question arose whether the remaining money should go in nourishment for a sick woman, or be spent on a meal for themselves. Looking quite serious, she said: "You know, Tom, it is your

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duty to fast as well as pray, and I have an idea that you have been praying more than fasting lately." That settled it. The fast was observed.

When the Working Lads' Institute was taken over, it was mutually agreed that residence there was imperative. During the intervening years, the question of a suburban dwelling was often discussed. This was urged by her husband and children, but always dismissed. She knew that wherever Thomas Jackson resided, his life would be spent in Whitechapel, and she wished to be there at hand to help. In this she shared the crown of her Redeemer, Who came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life." Well-meaning, but undiscerning friends have been inclined to pity her. Such pity was quite misplaced. She had her full share of sorrow, and chastened soul that she was, she would not have asked immunity from it ; but as far as her life in Whitechapel was concerned, her most precious joy was bound

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up in it. Nobody ever heard her speak of her sacrifices. They appeared sacrifices to others, but never to herself. Proud of the work, it was her life's finest privilege. The "stately homes of England" never yielded a greater time nor a happier life than her own in two rooms in Whitechapel. And why not? Remembering our Master, we should blush to detect ourselves thinking otherwise.

One despairs of doing justice to her manifold activities at Whitechapel. She was the directress of the work among women. Daily, she listened to their stories of distress, and just as often said or did something to ameliorate their lot. As Matron of the Home for friendless boys, her sympathy found full scope. For "bad lads" she always had a soft side. More than one boy owed his continued residence at the Home to her special pleading. She did not believe in the existence of a naturally criminal class. No case was too obstinate to yield to treatment. Indeed, in

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her eyes, they were not cases at all—just boys. The records of the Institute show how nobly some of them responded to her efforts.

Hundreds of lads respited from the police courts bless her memory. For some of them, their first impression of human kindness came from the motherliness of Mrs. Jackson's words and works.

Never physically strong, the war broke down her defences. During the air raids, the doors of the Institute were open to all. Often the basement was crowded by terror-stricken foreign women whose wild shrieks did more to reduce her strength than the noise of the enemy's attack.

One night there came a terrible, but glorious moment—terrible because of what she saw, but glorious because of what she thought. From the roof of the Institute she saw a blazing Zeppelin fall to the ground—the first that fell. When a roar of triumph went up from the crowd, she was horror-stricken. Recounting the experience, she said: "I stood there and thought.

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Oh, 'they are men ; they are men in that blazing airship'." Yes, they were men—human beings—and it is just the solicitude for human life that belonged to her that will make an end to such scenes, and cause war itself to cease.

Even in days of physical weakness, her one desire was to help. The last month of her earthly life was spent by the sea, in company with her daughter. It was a time of tranquil happiness. Towards its close she caught a chill, and pneumonia followed. Among her last utterances were anxious enquiries whether all was well at Whitechapel. In the early morning of July 26th, 1923, she passed into new life.

" To many a foundering soul she stretched
The hand of hope ; and from her eyes
they caught
The light of Heaven, that brightens into
hope,
The sinners' hope, from Him, the
Crucified."

CHAPTER XXII

RECOGNITION

THOMAS JACKSON'S work is a glory and a rejoicing to Primitive Methodists, and they have sought to crown him with honour. At the Conference of the year 1911, he was astonished by the insertion of his name in the list of possible Presidents for the following year. A host of friends desired that he should be thus distinguished. His natural impulses impelled him to shun the exalted office, but when it was seen that retirement might easily be interpreted as discourtesy, he yielded to persuasion.

In submitting Thomas Jackson's name to the conference, his sponsor said : " He has depth and sincerity of character, sterling integrity, the genius for taking pains, courage and perseverance." This was not the first time that Thomas Jackson

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had been discussed in conference with a view to *promotion*. On a former occasion, admiring, but mistaken friends wished to make him a connexional secretary. One brother, noted for his blunt speech, said on that occasion: "I shall pay Thomas Jackson the compliment of voting against him. We have twenty men equal to this office, and three hundred men who think they are, but no other man can take Jackson's place."

As the Presidency demanded no serious interruption of the work at Whitechapel, he was designated by a large majority, and the man who, thirty-five years before, had begun as the humblest in the ranks of the ministry, found himself next in succession for his church's highest honour.

At the conference of the following year, in the city of Norwich, he duly succeeded to the Presidential chair. His Whitechapel friends, Jews, Roman Catholics, Anglicans and Nonconformists, marked the occasion by the gift of a cheque for a hundred

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pounds, which at once passed into the funds of Whitechapel Mission.

After the manner of Methodist Presidents, Thomas Jackson spent much time in travel ; preaching, lecturing and addressing very varied gatherings. Among the entertaining stories of his " travel year " is one which sets the President in melodramatic light. Visiting a small Welsh town, he unexpectedly found himself a great " draw." He had been advertised as the Whitechapel missionary, but a local wag altered a word, and the poster then read : " The Whitechapel murderer will preach." A very crowded church awaited him that day, but his appearance must have been very disappointing, for who less resembles the popular idea of a manslayer than Thomas Jackson ?

On October 16th, 1922, fell Thomas Jackson's forty-sixth ministerial anniversary, which coincided with his seventy-second birthday. The newspapers intimated that Dr. John Clifford's eightieth birthday was on the same date, and

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published photographs of both men in one setting. These highly privileged mortals exchanged joyous letters. Dr. Clifford wrote :

“ My Dear Friend,

Thank you very much for your cheery letter on our passing another milestone in life's journey. The end of this pilgrimage begins to rise above the horizon for me, though you can look for a longer stretch of the road ; but long or short our stay on God's good earth, we are under His loving leadership, and sustained by His gracious companionship, and that is enough ; for in His presence there is fulness of joy. He Who has wrought in us to prepare us for our Eternal Home has given us the ' earnest of His spirit,' so that Heaven begins now and here. What a blessed work you are doing in the East End. I praise God for your labours in that wide, crowded, though difficult, field. On my birthday I finish sixty years in this Western

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part of London, and expect to sing ' Here I raise my Ebenezer, Hither by Thy help I come '—and I expect to preside on that day over a gathering of men to discuss Personal Evangelism. May God give you a blessed Anniversary is the prayer of—
Yours cordially, John Clifford."

In anticipation of this forty-sixth anniversary, the officers of the Primitive Methodist church opened a fund with the object of purchasing an annuity for Mr. and Mrs. Jackson. They, however, refused to accept anything for themselves, and a sum of six hundred pounds which had been already contributed, was given to the Mission. About the same time, Thomas Jackson attended a meeting of the City Corporation's Committee, at the London Guildhall, to receive a donation of one hundred pounds for the Whitechapel work.

The late Sir Thomas Robinson, of Cleethorpes, a constant friend of the Mission, presided over the Anniversary

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meeting. It was a thrilling moment when, in the course of his annual statement, Thomas Jackson quietly said :

“ Mr. Chairman and dear friends,

It is a great privilege and pleasure on the occasion of my seventy-second birthday and the forty-sixth anniversary of my ministry in East London, to show my gratitude to God for continued health and life, and my desire for the welfare of the poor in the East End, by presenting on behalf of my wife and myself, the sum of fourteen hundred and sixty pounds, the entire cost of the new Belper House erected at Southend-on-Sea, the net rent of which will be given to assist in the work of the Whitechapel Mission and the Working Lads' Institute. The explanation of my being able to present this thank-offering is, that an old and intimate friend, though not a member of any church, was concerned that I should have some extra provision for a little extra comfort when I retired

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from active ministerial duties, and so left me a legacy of £1,200. By frugality and economy, Mrs. Jackson and I have been able to add our savings of £260 to this legacy and so make my Birthday Thank-offering of £1,460. I have no greater pleasure, and desire no higher honour, than to spend and be spent in useful service in Whitechapel and the East End, for the social and spiritual good of the poor and needy."

This striking statement induced a profound stillness, which was only broken by the singing of the Doxology. The late Mr. C. R. Maynard, the Treasurer of the Institute, whose years in the service of London Primitive Methodism were even more than Thomas Jackson's, then accepted the cheque. Very falteringly, and under the stress of great emotion, Mr. Maynard said: "During my long connection with Primitive Methodism in London, I have never known anything like this. Mr. and Mrs. Jackson have done a great thing."

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On October 18th, 1926, the Mansion House doors of the world's greatest city opened to do honour to a slum missionary. Thomas Jackson's period of ministry in London was coeval with the age of the Institute, and the jubilee of both was celebrated on the same day. All through its history, the Working Lads' Institute has been closely associated with the City of London. Its work had been inaugurated in the Mansion House, and for fifty years a procession of distinguished Lord Mayors had passed through its doors to attend the Institute anniversaries. The Lord Mayor of London welcomed an audience which consisted of many classes, from baronets to slum-dwellers. As always happens at the Institute anniversary, Thomas Jackson's report stood first in the agenda. The Lord Mayor had been studying this report, and had extracted parts of it for his speech. He humorously complained that he had been anticipated, but added: "I am content to be anticipated by Thomas Jackson,



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who is in the habit of anticipating people, not only by good words, but with good works."

Choice words, almost amounting to veneration, were spoken of the man who had tried to do so much, and had achieved nearly all that he had attempted.

Professor A. L. Humphries, the learned President of the Primitive Methodist Conference, hailed "one of London's worthiest citizens," and said: "If long and unselfish service be the measure of merit, then this celebration is in fitting succession to all the noble causes that have been represented in this historic place. Thomas Jackson is one of the Greathearts of our church. For fifty years he has laboured among the poor of East London, where the cheer of religion is sorely needed. He may not love mean streets, but he certainly loves the people who live in them. He is the friend of the destitute, a protector of those in moral peril, and a dispenser of the light and comfort of the Gospel. He has been eyes

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to the blind and feet to the lame ; the blessing of those who are ready to perish has fallen upon him.”

The Vice-President of the Primitive Methodist church, Mr. Moses Bourne, J.P., an eloquent and trusted layman, uttered his tribute with natural dignity and humour. “ Thomas Jackson has been willing to let the world see what God can do with a fully-consecrated man. He has denied himself all personal ease and gain, and has won the best reward of all—the gratitude of the people and the benediction of God. I was present when a cottage in Devonshire was proffered to Mr. Jackson for his use during his retirement. His answer was ‘ I am not going to retire yet, and when I do, it will not be to a cottage, but to a mansion.’ He has got as far as the Mansion House on his way to the other mansion.”

The Rev. J. A. Mayo, M.A., Rector of Whitechapel, brought the congratulations of the largest parish in London :—“ Last night I sat down and read the report of the

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Whitechapel Mission from cover to cover. Then I read every word of it again. This report is an epic. If it could be put into blank verse it would be one of our great poems. A brother clergyman often claims the Prince of Wales as his parishioner. I always counter that boast with : ' But we have Thomas Jackson in Whitechapel '."

The Jewish Rabbi of Stepney attended to represent the members of his race who live in Whitechapel. He said that wherever a meeting was called for the promotion of good work, for either Christians or Jews, Thomas Jackson was there.

The London County Council was represented by Alderman C. C. Johnson, who described the great sights of Whitechapel,—the Royal Mint, the London Hospital, and the Working Lads' Institute. " The Institute was coining something more precious than the Mint coined ; and if the Hospital mended bodies, the Institute repaired minds."

Henry Hill, the Founder, told of by-gone

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days, and claimed that "God had not only inspired, but directed the work of the Institute." A tremor came into the old voice when he made mention of "that devoted woman, the angel of Whitechapel and the mother of the Home, Mrs. Jackson."

Not in the Mansion House, but in Brunswick Hall, among his own people, did Thomas Jackson's face most brightly shine on that day of Jubilee. In the evening a Lovefeast was held, and never was the spirit of the ancient *agape* more manifest. A crowded audience of poor people rose high above their poverty and sorrow, into a communion for ever blessed. The painful things of time were forgotten in an ecstatic realisation of joys supernal. Representatives of the Women's Own thanked their minister for "making religion so real" to them, and assured him that they "stood for Christian living." A man who had been in the night shelter rose and said:—"The men say 'Thank you' for your grand friendliness." The lads of
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the Institute offered their testimony in verse :—

“ Love and praise you can obtain,
Which even men of greater fame
Would give their all to share.”

When the Rev. J. E. Thorpe, a colleague in the work of the Mission, announced that Thomas Jackson would invest the Jubilee Testimonial Fund of £2,000 for the work of the Institute, the spirit of jubilation was unbounded.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE MAN AND THE MOTIVE

WHAT manner of man is Thomas Jackson? What is the driving force which has carried him forward throughout his long life of philanthropic enterprise and evangelistic achievement? How does a poor boy, the son of humble parents, and without any advantages of education and environment, become a pioneer social reformer and the founder of a great Mission?

He is spare, almost ascetic in appearance. His lithe frame indicates a life of strenuous action, in which there has been no pampering of the body. Of simple tastes and frugal habits, his personal expenditure has always been kept within the narrowest possible limits. The first impression one receives on visiting his private rooms at the Institute is one of Spartan severity. In

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mediaeval times he might have been an anchorite, but with his clearer insight into the meaning of religion, the zeal of the devotee has urged him into the arena and not into the hermitage. His strict and reasoned frugality has kept him in excellent health, and throughout the years he has been strong and alert, his brain and body the able and willing servants of his invincible spirit.

Abstemious habits have left him the means for his wonderful personal generosity. Times without number he has replenished the declining coffers of his Mission from his own savings—savings wrung out of a small income. His good friends have often tried to persuade him to take a house in the country, and allow himself more comfort in his declining years. Some of these have left him legacies for this purpose, and he has received sums of money as testimonials and private gifts. The donors were anxious that Thomas Jackson should take more care of himself, and enjoy some of the ease and

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even luxuries that are but due after a life of such unsparing effort. But his only use for money, after providing the barest necessities of life, has been to make his Mission a more efficient instrument for the Kingdom of God, and to relieve the distresses of his fellows. When he began the Whitechapel work, he whimsically convened a meeting which was only attended by himself and Mrs. Jackson, and a very serious resolution was unanimously approved :—" That we hereby heartily resolve that in order to comply with the condition upon which we may consistently claim the blessing of God and the assurance of success, we devote our time, strength, and money without reserve to the work of this Mission."

A man of keen mind, he would undoubtedly have made a success of a business career. Punctuality in all things is his rule. No correspondent ever complained of Thomas Jackson's tardiness in answering a letter. To reply by return of post is his

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realised ideal. With his incisive judgment and strong business sense, he must have become a rich man had he chosen to use his talents in the world of affairs. His efficient management of all his enterprises is abundant proof of this. He has shown great initiative in all his undertakings, and none has been relinquished for want of perseverance and courage.

He has come into contact with all varieties of humanity during his long career, and his judgment of men is sure and sound. Once or twice he has been deceived, but not very often. The slim types who have attempted to beguile him have soon recognised the futility of their methods. Thomas Jackson could write a useful manual for the guidance of the charitable if he were so disposed. But no genuine appeal was ever made to him in vain, for his heart is ever tender towards the poor.

Thomas Jackson possesses a wonderful power of managing a crowd. He is a master of repartee, and seems always to be able to

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say the right thing ; no light task with some of the audiences he has to face. His voice always charms, whether he is addressing congregations or singing to them ; and indeed, no small portion of his success in gripping street gatherings is due to his preliminary rendering of some simple hymn. He has never lacked the courage to take his stand alone at a street corner and to start a hymn, by way of introducing a short service. It is only strong conviction and a high purpose that can uphold such an enterprise.

Thomas Jackson's religion is of the simplest, and it acknowledges no denominational boundaries. His sympathies are for the lapsed and the lost whatever their religion, or even if they have no religion at all. In one of his addresses he passionately declared that " in the presence of so much sorrow, suffering, vice and sin, it is unworthy of any minister to make his chief concern the conversion of an Anglican to a Methodist, a Catholic to a Protestant,

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or even a Jew to a Christian. The aim of each and all should be to convert a sinner from the error of his ways." The teaching of the high truths of his conception of Christianity is his mission and purpose in life; and in its light he recognises and accepts great obligations. He was converted when a very young man to a belief in Jesus Christ and His teaching; and that has always been his religion. Modernism does not trouble him, and he is not versed in the Higher Criticism. Far from disdaining these things, and while cherishing the friendliest feelings for their exponents, his time has been occupied with weightier matters. The possessor of a good brain, capable of scholarly attainment, he has sacrificed scholarship for service, and used his full strength in evangelical and philanthropic endeavour. For him abideth faith, hope, charity; these three, and the greatest of these is charity.

The dominating force in Thomas Jackson's life is this fundamental religious

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passion. As soon as Christian truth was revealed to him, he burned with missionary zeal. He has the reformer's temperament, and all the enthusiasm which proceeds from an intense conviction of the Truth that can save the world. He reads eagerly and omnivorously, but his soul finds its best expression in evangelical preaching.

Inevitably such a man became a missionary. He knew the meaning of poverty and misery, and the passion to save overwhelmed him. He became a man of single aim, and he could not falter nor turn back. An altruist, he has made his whole life a sacrifice ; yet to him it has been no sacrifice ; rather, a glorious fulfilment. He has discovered the truest and deepest meaning of life, and he has gathered for himself a glorious heritage. Christianity to Thomas Jackson means social service for the love of Christ, and thousands of poor people bless the man who thus interprets his obligations as a follower of the Carpenter.

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The Rev. Thomas Tiplady, after visiting Whitechapel, wrote in the "Methodist Times":—"I have sat in wealthy homes, and I have looked on great men who occupied proud positions, and have felt no envy. But I could not sit in Thomas Jackson's plain office, note his homely clothing, watch his shrewd humorous face, and listen to his story, without feeling envy. I know a hero when I see him, for my life at the Front gave me opportunities of studying the heroic type, and I have no doubt about Jackson. You will find him living in two rooms in the Home for Friendless and Homeless Lads in Whitechapel. You may see him now, but in the after-life he and his wife will be too near the Throne for you or me to see."

In the seventy-ninth year of his life Thomas Jackson looks back on the creation of four circuits with one thousand and twenty-one members, two thousand and twenty-five teachers and scholars, and properties valued at more than sixty

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thousand pounds. And still the fires of his consecration burn undimmed. Though the body is weaker, the voice rings out the message of salvation with the same certainty and clearness as of yore. Not for Thomas Jackson the subdued mood of those who "only stand and wait," but rather the robust spirit of the untired toiler who began with the dawn and will continue until darkness falls. Meanwhile, still pursuing, he "fears no foe, broods over no privation, and regards no difficulty as insuperable." A Victor!

THE END

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